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ABSTRACT

Labor force issues do not take place in a vacuum. Most individuals base labor force decisions on a multitude of cultural and social factors, such as the environment in which they were reared, family obligations and responsibilities, divorce or the death of a spouse, or because of governmental policies. Sections in this document on demographics, labor force, and business ownership examine information on the social and economic characteristics of Blacks, American Indians, and Asians in Oregon to obtain a better understanding of the relationships of these characteristics to choices made in the workforce. Substantial differences exist among the three groups with respect to educational achievement, marital status, and high school drop-out rates. In turn, the groups exhibit substantial differences in occupational choice, average hourly wage, and unemployment rates. It must also be recognized that Oregon's racial minorities differ with respect to the importance of education, career success, and financial reward. For example, American Indians who choose to stay on a reservation are indicating that their traditional culture and family relationships are more important than a secure job in the city. For these individuals, the challenge is even greater than that of the rest of Oregon's rural population: finding economic opportunities without losing cultural values or ties to family and friends. Profiles of individuals in each group are presented. (Contains 13 references, 11 tables, and 27 graphs.) (TD)

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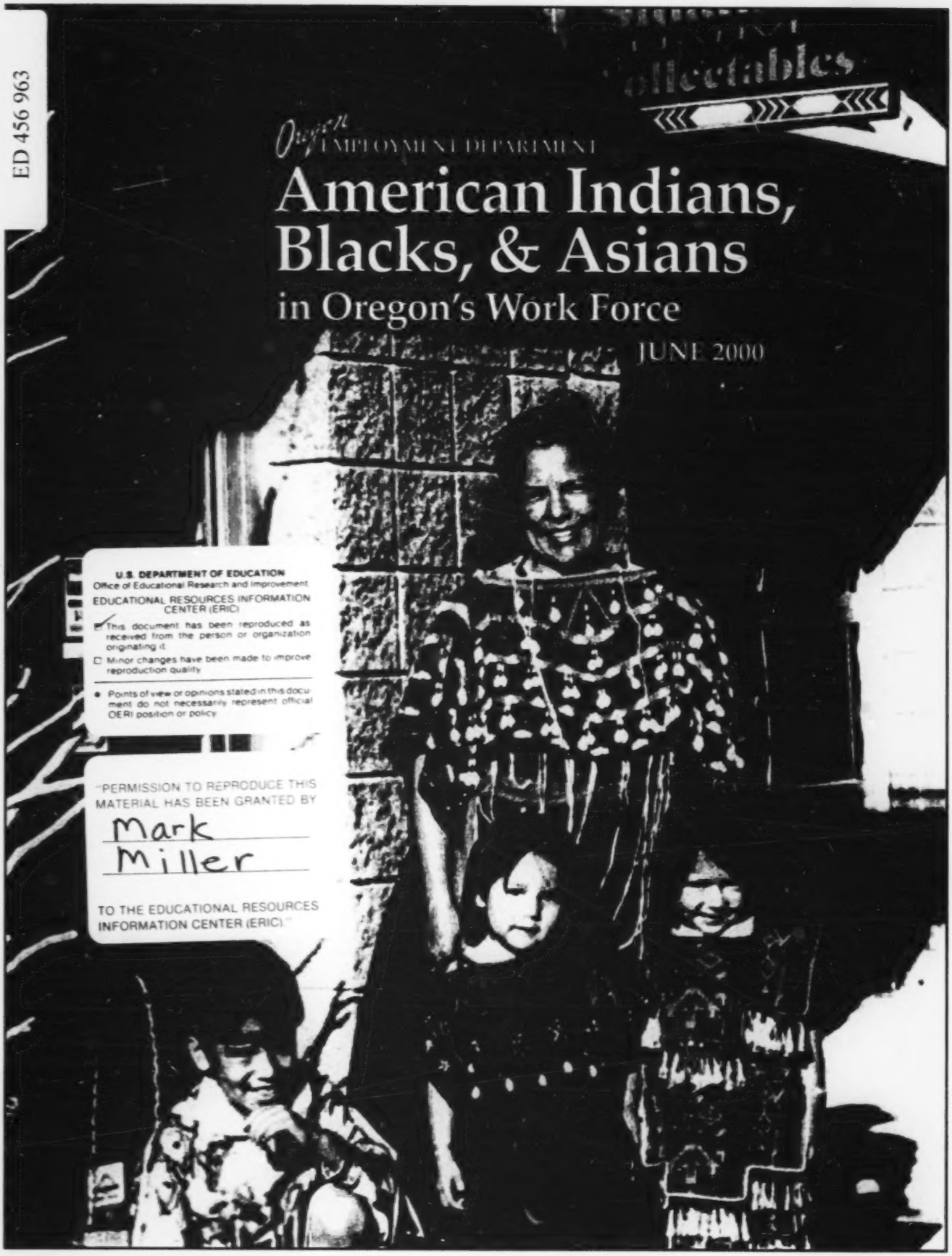

Oregon Employment Department

American Indians, Blacks, & Asians in Oregon's Work Force

JUNE 2000

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JUNE 2000

Oregon EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT
Working In Oregon

American Indians, Blacks, & Asians in Oregon's Work Force

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American Indians, Blacks, & Asians
in Oregon's Work Force

JUNE 2000

Executive Summary

Information on the social and economic characteristics of Blacks, American Indians, and Asians/Pacific Islanders is examined in order to obtain a better understanding of the interrelationship between choices made in the work force and the general social and economic characteristics of each of these racial groups. Substantial differences exist among the three racial minority groups with respect to educational achievement, marital status, and high school drop-out rates. In turn, there are substantial differences between these groups with respect to occupational choice, average hourly wage, and unemployment rates.

■ Comprising only two percent of Oregon's population in 1970, American Indians, Asians, and Blacks now comprise more than six percent of the population.

■ More than half of Oregon's Asian population is foreign born. Comparatively, less than five percent of Oregon's Black population and virtually no American Indians are foreign born.

■ More than 80 percent of Oregon's Black population and just under 70 percent of Oregon's Asian population lives in the Portland-metro area. Approximately 30 percent of Oregon's American Indian population lives in the Portland-metro area.

■ The unemployment rate of American Indians living on or near a reservation is far higher than the state unemployment rate. In fact, Indians living on or near several Oregon reservations experience unemployment rates of greater than 40 percent.

■ Blacks, 25 years old or older, are less than half as likely as either Asians or American Indians to be married.

■ Almost 30 percent of Oregon Blacks live below the poverty level. This is characteristic of the relatively large number of households that are headed by a female, with no husband present. American Indians also suffer high rates of poverty, with more than 20 percent of the population below the poverty level. Only about 10 percent of Oregon's Asian population lives below the poverty level. This is less than the proportion for all Oregonians.

■ Asians in Oregon are more than three times as likely as Blacks or Indians to have at least a 4-year college degree.

■ Asians are much less likely to drop out of high school than are Blacks or American Indians.

■ Asians are more than twice as likely to work in a professional or technical occupation as are Blacks or Indians.

■ American Indians are more than five times as likely to work in construction as are Blacks or Asians.

■ The average hourly earnings of Blacks is statistically significantly lower than the all-Oregonian average.

■ Business ownership among Blacks, American Indians, and Asians has grown throughout the 90s at a greater rate than the total business ownership growth rate.

■ In 1992 there were seven Oregon counties with 100 or more minority-owned businesses.

American Indians, Blacks, & Asians
in Oregon's Work Force

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American Indians, Blacks, & Asians
in Oregon's Work Force

Introduction

Oregon's minority population is growing much more rapidly than the general population. In 1998 the Oregon Employment Department published *Hispanics in Oregon's Workforce*, which examines the social and employment characteristics of Oregon's fastest-growing ethnic group. This publication, *American Indians, Blacks, and Asians in Oregon's Work Force*, is the first publication by the Oregon Employment Department to bring together socio-economic and labor force information about Oregon's racial minorities. We hope that this publication will be a valuable source of information for those interested in issues related to Oregon's minority workforce.

Unless otherwise noted, the term American Indian refers to American Indians from recognized and unrecognized Oregon tribes and members of tribes from other parts of the United States, as well as to Alaskan Native, Eskimo, and Aleuts.

Asian refers to people whose genetic origins are from any part of Asia (including the Indian subcontinent), and to people from the Pacific Islands.

Profile

Lilian Bruno

Although she lives on the Warm Springs reservation and four of her eight children are tribal members, Lilian was born in San Diego, California and is of Apache, Yaqui, and Aztec Indian descent. Lilian was invited by tribal members to move onto the Warm Springs in 1985 to help organize a survival school, a program intended to teach traditional skills to the young people of the tribe. Lilian came to the Warm Springs with bountiful experience as a businesswoman and community leader. Despite growing up on an isolated reservation in southern California, Lilian has worked in small business development in several California communities, traveled extensively as a carnival worker and manager, and has sold insurance, Kirby vacuum cleaners, and Ford cars.

Since arriving on the reservation she has worked in the tribal fish hatchery and the center for battered women. She has started two businesses, a janitorial service company and an art and craft store, both of which she still operates today. Lillian opened the janitorial service company in the early 1990s because she saw a need on the reservation for such a service and it was a way to support her family. In 1995 she opened an Indian art and craft store, Sidaiktba Native Collectables, across from The Museum at Warm Springs. Like the

A Brief History of Oregon's American Indian Population

It is not possible, in this brief publication, to do justice to the rich and extensive history of Oregon's tribes. It will, however, suffice to examine several events from the 19th and 20th centuries that have played key roles in creating the present-day social and economic environment in which Oregon's Indian tribal members find themselves.

As in other times and places across America, much of the early interaction between the White settlers and the native population was anything but positive. At the heart of most problems was a conflicting view on land ownership and societal structure. The views could not be more polar and were inherently mutually exclusive. On one side was the view that land was not a commodity individuals could own or sell, and society was structured around what the land could provide with respect to food, shelter, and safety. On the other side was the view that land could and should be owned by individuals, and society was structured around what the individual could produce using his land and labor.

Joseph Lane, Oregon's first governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs, arrived in Oregon in 1849. Although there had been decades of interactions between Indians and Whites, this marked the beginning of large-scale migration of Whites to Oregon, and the beginning of negotiations between the U.S. government and Oregon tribes. By 1865, 12 treaties were signed by the U.S. government and Oregon tribes and ratified by the U.S. Senate. These treaties ceded most of Oregon to the United States and created the Umatilla and Warm Springs reservations. During this same period, the Grand Ronde and Siletz reservations were formed by executive order. The Burns Paiute reservation was not established until 1972.

Although presented as a simple story of land cession and reservation creation, the story of treaty rights and reservation autonomy was not so simple. Soon after the federal government formed the reservations, this same government began to pare away significant portions of the reservation lands. Generally, this was due to pressure put on the state and local governments by settlers and business interests who wanted to develop the land. There was also growing concern throughout the U.S. that the reservation system was not working. In Oregon, conflicts arose on those reservations that held bands of Indians historically hostile to each other, where government administrators of reservations were thought corrupt or incompetent, and where Indians were encouraged to farm land unsuited to agriculture.

The Modoc war of 1872, south of Klamath Falls; the Nez Perce war of 1877 in northeastern Oregon; and the Bannock war of 1878

janitorial service company, Lilian saw the store as an economic opportunity for herself, her family, and the tribe, but the store is also a labor of love. The shop sells handmade crafts, many of which Lilian and her children make themselves, as well as souvenirs. Through her store, Lilian also does custom sewing - a skill she has become well-known for in central Oregon and beyond - of anything from deerskin moccasins to traditional wedding dresses.

Lillian says she is largely driven by a belief in self-sufficiency. She has spent most of her adult life as a single mother and is proud that she no longer relies on government assistance. She freely admits that raising a family as a single parent hasn't been easy for her, but cites her strong faith in God and her desire to be a role model for her children and for the young people on the reservation have given her the motivation to be successful. Although not a Warm Springs tribal member, Lilian stays involved with many of the cultural and spiritual activities on the reservation. In her gift and craft shop she has five large tables pushed together to do sewing, painting, and other types of "crafting." The tables also serve as an impromptu gathering place for tribal members and others. She is happy that her shop has become a place where issues and ideas important to the tribe and its members are freely discussed, and she is especially happy when tribal elders stop by and talk about the history and lore of the tribes.

in southeastern Oregon, the last of the Indian wars, all arose out of resistance to reservation life *(Oregon Blue Book 1999-2000 Edition)*. Anti-reservation sentiment came to a head in 1887 with the Dawes Act, which abolished communal holdings of reservation lands by natives. In a move designed to encourage reservation Indians to become independent farmers, the Dawes Act divided the reservations into separate parcels that were to be owned individually instead of collectively. Although the act was passed with good intentions, the chief result was a vast reduction in the amount of land held by Indians, and a reduction of the American Indian economies, which relied on that land.

Again, with the thought that the reservation system was failing, the U.S. government in the 1950s moved to assimilate many American Indians into the American mainstream. The process, known as "termination," ended federal trusteeship of roughly three percent of America's Indian population. Termination policies hit timber-resource tribes particularly hard, including those in Oregon. Although the purpose of the legislation was integration, the results adversely affected the tribes culturally, politically, and economically.

Efforts have been made in the last few decades by many terminated tribes to again be recognized by the U.S. government and to reinstate the former trust relationship. In 1977, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz won restoration, followed by the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians in late 1982, the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde in November 1983, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians in 1984, the Klamath Tribe in 1986, and the Coquille Tribe in 1989.

Oregon now has nine federally recognized tribes: the Burns Paiute Tribe; the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians; the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde; the Confederated Tribes of Siletz; the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs; the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation; the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians; the Klamath Tribe; and the Coquille Tribe. On May 22, 1996, Governor John A. Kitzhaber signed Executive Order No. EO-96-30, which officially recognized state/tribal government-to-government relations *(Oregon Blue Book, 1999-2000 Edition)*.

Profile

Walter Simmons

Walter grew up in Williams, Arizona, the youngest of four children. He and his wife moved from Phoenix, Arizona to Southbeach, Oregon in 1991 in order to "escape the heat and violence." Walter was a little concerned at first about moving to an area with very few Blacks, but he says that he feels very accepted in Toledo and Newport. Walter claims that if you portray yourself as an intelligent and dignified person, others will see you as this. He feels it is important for minorities to know that if you play the stereotype people expect, don't expect to be accepted. On the other hand, if you just be yourself and show others respect, they will accept and respect you.

Prior to moving to Oregon, Walter worked for the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles, for a state agency helping disabled people, and for the Forest Service. After arriving in Southbeach, Walter worked at a local nursery and as a checker at Fred Meyer. He is currently the assistant storekeeper for the Public Utility District's South Beach Warehouse. Walter says he really enjoys his job because the money is good and the people are great. In addition, he has learned a great deal about electricity and how it is delivered to homes and businesses. Walter says that no matter the job, he wants to learn something new.

A Brief History of Blacks in Oregon

Just prior to World War II, Oregon's Black population was barely more than 2,500. Like today, it was concentrated in the Portland area, with 80 percent of Oregon's Black population living in Multnomah County. The railroads were a major employer of Portland-area Blacks during the late 1800s and early-to-mid 1900s. In fact, an estimated 98.6 percent of Oregon Blacks worked for the railroads in 1941 (*A Peculiar Paradise*, Elizabeth McLagan 1980 pg. 116). Although a major source of employment for Blacks throughout the country, the railroads generally provided only low-paying jobs such as waiters, cooks, and porters.

The first major migration of Blacks to Oregon began in 1942, as thousands of workers moved to Portland to work in the shipyards and related jobs in support of America's war effort. Across the U.S., men and women either entered the workforce for the first time or moved from farm to factory in order to produce the equipment necessary to wage war. As many as 25,000 Blacks migrated to Oregon between 1940 and 1950, as well as more than 100,000 Whites (*Blacks in Oregon*, Little and Weiss 1978 pg. 40). A large number of the workers who moved to Portland for the war-time jobs left when the jobs ended. Nevertheless, Oregon's Black population increased by 8,864 to 11,529 between 1940 and 1950.

In Oregon and elsewhere across the nation, the period following World War II was marked by the elimination of laws that discriminated against Blacks, and by the creation of policy designed to help remedy past discrimination. In addition, America's post war economic boom drew Blacks, who were still largely concentrated in the South, to the industrial cities of the North and West. Portland was such a city, as the Black population grew by four percent per year through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Comparatively, Oregon's overall population grew by less than two percent per year during the same period. Not only has Oregon's Black population more than quadrupled since 1950, Blacks today are more likely to live in areas outside the Portland-metro area than they were in the 1940s and 1950s.

What advice would Walter give to others entering the workforce? He says it is very important, especially for minorities, to show that you are intelligent and have respect for yourself. There may still be those who won't accept you, but don't let that bother you and don't let those people run over you. In the end, if you present yourself well, those who matter will accept and respect you.

Profile

Sy Mai

Sy was born in Nandinh, North Vietnam around 1940. In his life, he has seen and experienced poverty and war. When Sy was born, North Vietnam was a French colony. Although the country was stable, the French maintained a largely repressive regime that kept the majority of North Vietnamese poor and uneducated. During most of World War II, North Vietnam was occupied by the Japanese Army, and the repression of the French was replaced with brutality and starvation. After the war, the French attempted to reinstate their role as colonizer. However, the world had changed and the French were met with ever-growing opposition from the Vietnamese. Although Americans think of the Vietnam War as beginning in the mid-1960s, for the Vietnamese the war began decades earlier. Eventually, in an attempt to escape the war and starvation, Sy's family moved to South Vietnam.

One would think that under the social conditions in which he lived, Sy would not have had access to education. As it turns out, because of his recognized intelligence and his desire to learn, Sy received his education through a Catholic-run French high school. In addition, due to the increasing influence America was having in the region, he taught himself English and, through the urging of his wife, completed an American

A Brief History of Asians in Oregon

America's Asian population is composed of many different ethnic groups. According to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, an Asian or Pacific Islander is any person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands.

Chinese

In the mid-to-late 1800s, Chinese immigrants were an essential source of mining and railroad construction labor. Around 1862, as the mining boom moved into eastern Oregon, much of the labor for digging ditches was performed by Chinese. In 1880, as many as 78 percent of the Chinese in eastern Oregon were employed in the mining industry. The other 22 percent were employed in other occupations such as railroad workers, cooks, laundrymen, laborers, and merchants. As the mining in eastern Oregon came to an end, many Chinese moved to coastal cities and worked as laborers and factory workers, while others migrated to Portland and worked in the salmon canning industry. By the mid-1870s, the Chinese had become the largest ethnic group in Portland and by 1880 there were 9,510 Chinese living in Oregon. Chinese were allowed to become citizens of the United States in 1943.

Japanese

Due to the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the supply of Chinese railroad workers diminished and the railroad companies began actively pursuing Japanese workers. The first Japanese, like the Chinese, considered themselves sojourners and were typically young single males, or married males without their wives, who accepted menial railroad or mining work, or migrant farm work, jobs unwanted by Whites. In the early 1900s, railroad work quickly increased the Japanese population in Oregon to 2,500. Between 1908 and1924, Japanese immigration was restricted to those who were the most literate and brought money with them.

By 1910, many Japanese owned farms in Hood River, Salem, and eastern Multnomah County. In 1920, 60 percent of Oregon's Japanese population was employed in the agricultural industry. By 1940, Japanese farms produced 75 percent of the vegetables sold in Portland.

Shortly after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, the U.S. government forced many Japanese living in America into internment camps. In 1946, the internment camps were closed and Japanese living in America were incorporated back into American society.

correspondence course in computer programming - even though he had no access to a computer. In the early 1970s, Sy worked for the Agency for International Development (AID) in South Vietnam. An American-sponsored organization, the emphasis of the program was to provide assistance to the rural population of South Vietnam. In late April 1975 his American advisor called Sy into his office and told him to be at the Saigon airport on April 27 to fly out of Vietnam - three days prior to the fall of Saigon. Having been involved with the earlier peace negotiations and having direct association with the American Army, Sy had no choice but to leave Vietnam. Although they were not able to fly out with him, Sy was reunited with his wife and three children a couple of months later.

Soon after arriving in southern California, Sy and his family, with the help of the Catholic Church, moved to Portland. Sy worked for a Portland parish for two years, while he improved his English and continued his education in computer programming. In 1977 he began a 17-year career as a computer programmer with Tektronix. For the past five years he has worked as a senior programmer analyst for Intel. Sy credits his success to his strong faith in God, his drive to improve himself as a person, and his continued education in new technology.

Sy is adamant about his love and respect for America. He has a deep appreciation of the personal freedoms he enjoys as a citizen and for the culture, which rewards hard work and determination.

Sy believes that programming has proven itself to be the field of the future, and he encourages others to pursue education and employment in it. In addition, he offers three pieces of advice to those entering the workforce: 1 be a good person; 2 continue to study and learn; and 3 develop a deep understanding of the English language.

Koreans

Korean immigration began in the early 1900s. Like Chinese and Japanese immigrants, Koreans found work in the railroad and mining industries, as well as in low-skilled service occupations. Between 1910 and 1924, many in the predominantly single-male Korean community sent for "Korean picture brides." This greatly added to the Korean population in Oregon.

Between 1951 and 1964, many Koreans came to the U.S. as the wives or children of U.S. servicemen. Since 1964, most Koreans have immigrated in order to reunite with family members who earlier immigrated, or as alien workers for U.S. companies.

Southeast Asians

Heavy migration of Southeast Asians - Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians - began in 1975 with the passage of the Indo-China Migration and Refugee Assistance Act. Many of the first refugees who resettled in the U.S. were South Vietnamese who fled Saigon prior to its fall to the communists in 1975. Similarly, in 1975, many Cambodians fleeing from the brutal Khmer Rouge were resettled in the U.S. Laotians began arriving a year later with the passage of the Immigration Act of 1976, which made Laotians eligible for the same resettlement program as Vietnamese and Cambodians. Similar to the Vietnamese and Cambodians, Laotians left their country to escape fighting, execution, and starvation.

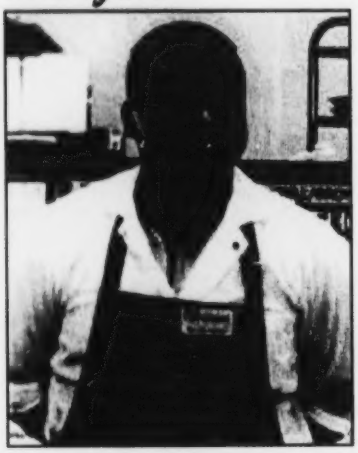
Pacific Islanders

The Pacific Islands, also called Oceania, is the name given to a group of many thousands of islands scattered across the South Pacific. The largest of the Pacific Islands is New Guinea. The vast area that Oceania encompasses extends to the Hawaiian Islands in the north, Easter Island in the east, and Palau in the west. The Pacific Islands are divided into three main areas: Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia. These divisions are based on the geography of the islands and on the culture and ethnic background of the native people. No information could be found detailing a period of significant migration to the U.S.

Indian Subcontinent

The Indian subcontinent consists of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. No information could be found detailing a period of significant migration to the U.S.

Profile



Erwin Watson

Erwin was born in Manila, Philippines and moved to Portland with his mother, sister, and stepfather, an American merchant marine, in 1972. After living in Portland only a short time his family moved to Maupin, where his stepfather worked in a sawmill. Erwin worked in a local grocery store through high school and after graduating. His responsibilities and training at the store increased continually, and it wasn't long before he was opening and closing the store, as well as managing others. During hunting season the store owners did custom butchering of deer and elk for local hunters. This is how Erwin was introduced to the meat-cutting trade. Erwin moved to Pendleton at age 19 to work at the local Safeway store and a few months later he transferred to the Hermiston store. Soon after moving to the Hermiston store, he completed the Safeway meat-cutting program and became a journeyman meat cutter. A few years later he advanced to his current position - meat department manager - where he is responsible for six employees.

Erwin credits much of his success with Safeway to good managers, who recognized his potential, and to changes in Safeway's corporate structure. Erwin says that Safeway has become much more focused on customer service and has implemented policies that make it a

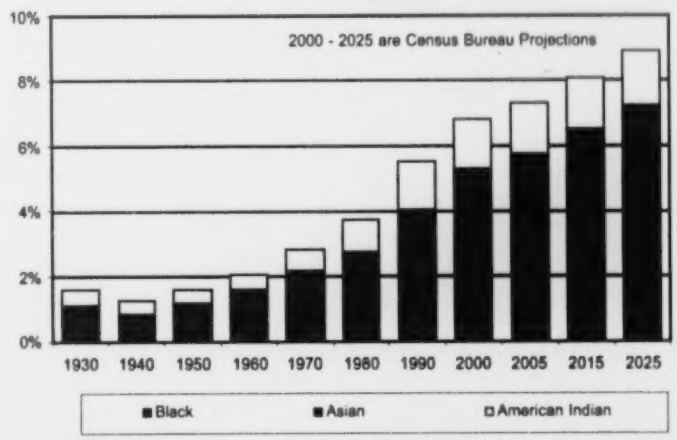
DEMOGRAPHICS

Although minorities still comprise a small proportion of the state's total population, Oregon, like the rest of the United States, is in the midst of tremendous change (see Graph 1). Some of the change is due to the declining birth rate of White women relative to women of other races, but much is due to the greatest influx of immigrants in U.S. history - most of whom are from Latin America, Asia, and the West Indies. From 1981 to 1996, the overwhelming number of immigrants came from a single country - Mexico - which was the birthplace of one-in-four immigrants to the U.S. (see Graph 2). This change in the profile of the population has a corresponding change on the workforce. Due to the recent dramatic changes in Oregon's racial makeup and to the phenomenal economic growth the state has experienced in recent years, the probability that a co-worker, employee, or boss is of a minority race or ethnicity has never been greater.

As long-time Oregon residents know, in-migration has played a huge role in the economic, social, and political environment of the state. This impact has been especially great during the 1990s. People have flocked to Oregon over the past ten years both to take advantage of employment opportunities created by the rapidly expanding economy and to start new businesses, which often create employment opportunities for others. In fact, according to the Employment Department's *1999 Oregon In-Migration Study*, 37 percent of those who moved to Oregon between 1995 and 1997 did so for a job.

GRAPH 1

Minority Proportion of Oregon's Population



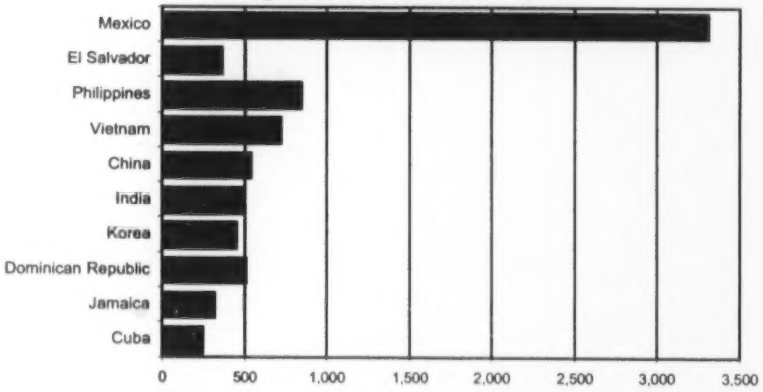
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

very family friendly place to work. Today Erwin's job is as much about providing customer service as it is about providing quality products. Because of this new customer focus, he feels less like the manager of the meat department and more like the village butcher. Due to the emphasis on customer service, a large portion of Erwin's job evaluation is based on him and his employees greeting customers. Because of his outgoing personality, this has never been a problem for Erwin.

Although he enjoys his work, Erwin says his family always comes first. With four active children - two boys and two girls - and a strong belief in community service and church, the family-friendly policies at Safeway are important to Erwin. He and his sons are very active in Tae Kwon Do and travel around the country for tournaments and exhibitions. In fact, Erwin expects to test this fall for his Black belt. He says he encourages anyone who enjoys working with the public and wants to learn a valuable trade to pursue meat cutting as a profession. He also says that no matter what line of work a person pursues he or she should work hard, make work enjoyable, and always keep family first.

GRAPH 2

Top Ten Countries of Origin of Immigrants to U.S. 1981 - 1996



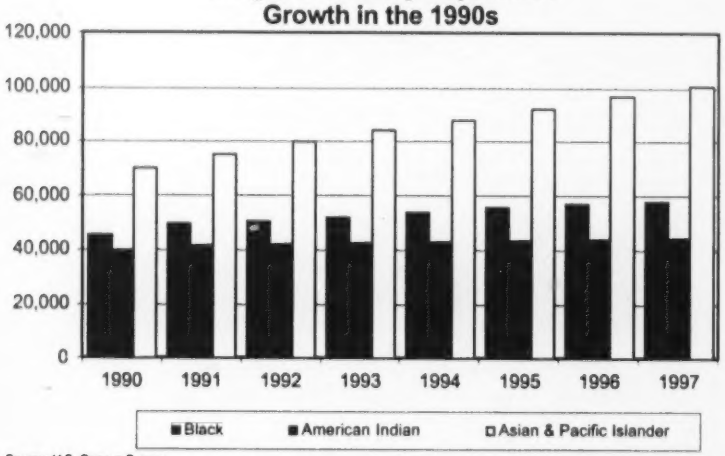
Source: U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service

Population trends in the 1990s

Although Whites comprise most of the growth in population in Oregon, the minority population is increasing at a much greater rate and is projected to continue to increase at a rate greater than the population as a whole. As Graph 3 indicates, the Asian population has grown rapidly during the 1990s. The Black population, while increasing at a lesser rate than Asians, has increased at twice the rate of all Oregonians. As Oregon's population increased by almost 14 percent between 1990 and 1997, the Asian population grew by a staggering 43 percent and the Black population has increased 28

GRAPH 3

Oregon's Minority Population Growth in the 1990s



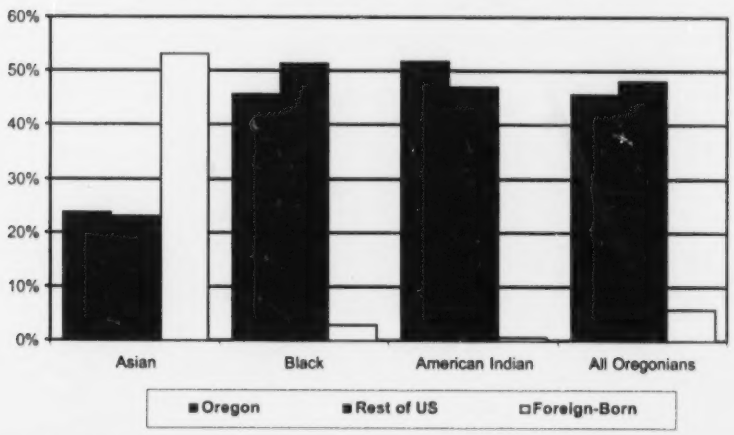
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

percent. The American Indian population grew at a slightly lower rate than the population as a whole - about 12 percent.

A unique difference between the Asian population in Oregon and in the U.S. relative to the other racial groups is the percent of the population that is foreign born. According to data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, 53 percent of Asians living in Oregon were born outside of the U.S. (see Graph 4). Comparatively, very few Blacks and practically no American Indians indicated they were foreign born. Nationally, according to 1990 U.S. Census data, 66 percent of Asians were born in foreign countries. Comparatively, only five percent of Blacks and eight percent of the total U.S. population were foreign born.

GRAPH 4

Birthplace of Oregonians by Race, 1998



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

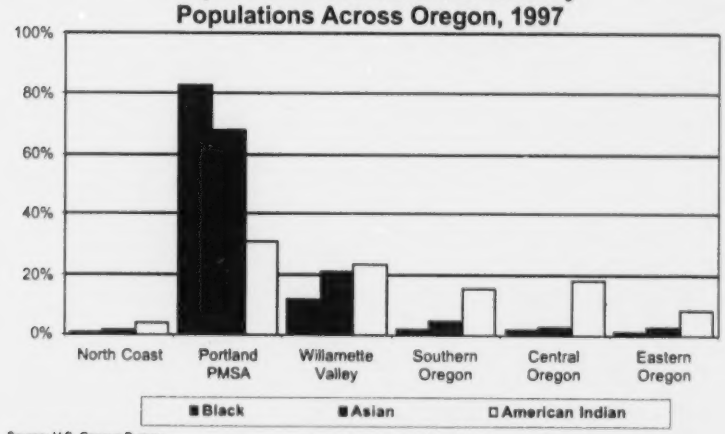
Region of residence varies greatly among Oregon's racial groups. The majority of Asians and the vast majority of Blacks in Oregon live in the Portland-metro area (see Graph 5). And, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 96 percent of Blacks and 89 percent of Asians live in either greater Portland or the Willamette Valley. For both of these groups - as well as for Oregonians of any stripe - these are the two areas where most of the job opportunities lie.

Historically, both Asians and Blacks in Oregon have been concentrated in the Portland area. This was due largely to job availability, and possibly as a way to maintain cultural identity. At times, it was also due to social conditions adverse to these populations in other parts of the state (McLagan 1980). Today, migration by these two groups, as well as persons of other races, to Portland and the Willamette Valley (or the decision to stay in these areas) is probably due solely to economic reasons.

Oregon's American Indian population is unique in that it is more evenly distributed around the state than any other racial group (Graph 5). This is due largely to the high percentage of Indians living on or near reservations, which are scattered across the state. Also, American Indians, in percentage terms, are employed more heavily in sectors not tied to Portland or the Willamette Valley metro areas. Based on data from the *1997 Bureau of Indian Affairs Local Estimates of Resident Indian Population and Labor Market Information Report*, 48 percent of Oregon's Indian population lives on or near a reservation. Living on or near a reservation provides American Indians with the benefits of family support and encouragement, and helps them maintain their unique cultural identity. However,

GRAPH 5

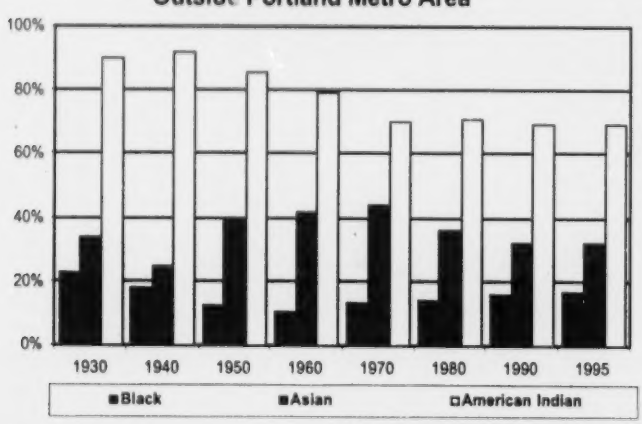
Proportional Distribution of Minority Populations Across Oregon, 1997



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

GRAPH 6

Percent of Minority Population Living Outside Portland Metro Area

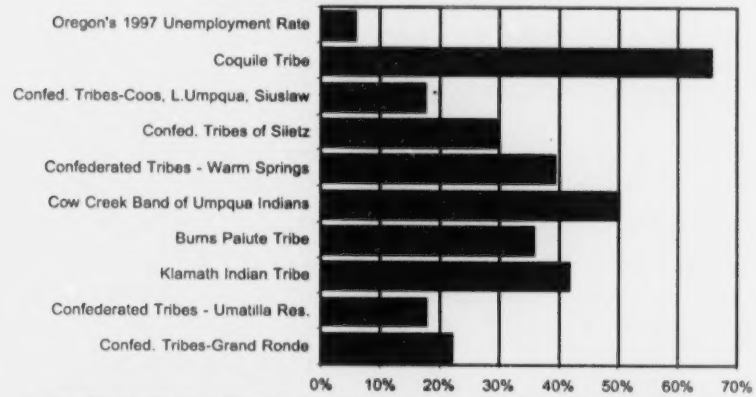


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Portland Metro Includes: Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, Washington, Yamhill Counties

GRAPH 7

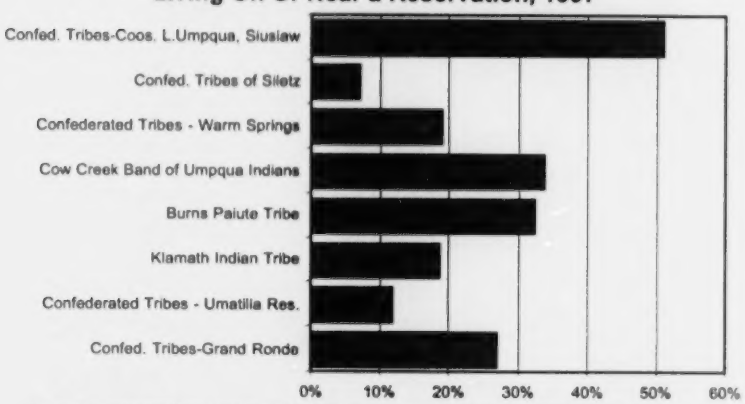
Unemployment Rates of American Indians Living On Or Near a Reservation, 1997



Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Local Estimates of Resident Indian Population and Labor Market Information

GRAPH 8

Poverty Rates of Working American Indians Living On Or Near a Reservation, 1997



Source: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Local Estimates of Resident Indian Population and Labor Market Information, 1997

staying on the reservation often comes at a price. Employment opportunities have traditionally been scarce on those reservations far from the economic centers where jobs are available. As education and career development increase, the ability to find suitable employment on or near the reservation may decrease. For many, accepting a job means leaving home. Many American Indians living on or near a reservation have chosen culture and family at the expense of higher earnings. To a lesser degree, this choice is made by anyone who grows up in a small town or rural area - to stay in an area with limited career opportunities or migrate to a city. For American Indians, the choice is probably much harder - they are

Profile

Jimmy Lim

Filipino by birth, Jimmy is proud that his six children - four boys and two girls - are native-born Americans. Jimmy is a graduate of Portland State University, where he studied engineering and started working on his masters. He served four years in the Coast Guard. He is a structural engineer and is the publisher of the Asian Reporter, a Portland-based weekly newspaper, which features international and local news and events with an Asian focus.

For several years, his two daughters have been running the newspaper, which Jimmy created. Besides working as an engineer Jimmy has owned a restaurant and a travel agency. He currently works about 40 hours per week as a consulting engineer, in addition to working on the Asian Reporter and his farm. What little free time he has Jimmy spends golfing and working on his farm in Newberg.

Jimmy says the biggest challenge to owning his own newspaper is marketing and promotion. Although his daughters run the publishing business, he helps do the marketing and the solicitation of prospective advertisers. He helped form the Pacific Northwest Minority Publishers Association two years ago to help direct government advertising dollars to his and other minority-owned publishing businesses.

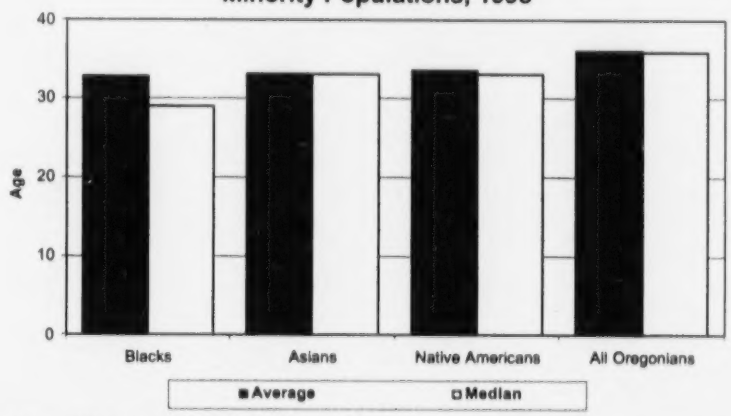
Jimmy would encourage others to look into business ownership. He says being your own boss is very fulfilling and rewarding, and the rewards can be much greater. He thinks the biggest drawback to Asians and others to business ownership is the lack of security. He feels most people prefer the relative security of white-collar jobs. For those looking into business ownership, Jimmy says that you should expect ups and downs and recommends that you diversify your resources.

a small percentage of the population and the geographic center of their culture and history is often relatively small and remote. As a consequence, many Indians elect to stay on or in the vicinity of the reservation. Because most reservations in Oregon are not blessed with abundant resource-rich lands and are far from either urban or rural economic centers, the unemployment rate for reservation Indians is much higher than the unemployment rate for Oregon (see Graph 7), or its counties. (Grant County, at 13.5%, had the highest unemployment rate of any Oregon county in 1998.)

Business development on reservations is hampered in much the same way. Due to distance from population centers, the reservations have a difficult time attracting businesses wary of the challenges associated with a small local labor pool. For those American Indians wishing to start businesses, access to capital is also a major challenge, as reservation land cannot be used as collateral on a loan. Economic development often means land development. For many, the potential economic value of reservation land is much less than the land's historic and cultural value.

GRAPH 9

Average and Median Age of Oregon's Minority Populations, 1998



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Still, having a job is not necessarily an escape from financial hardship. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that 5.8 percent of the national workforce in 1996 lived below the poverty level. These working poor represent 20 percent of the estimated 36.5 million persons living at or below the official poverty level in the U.S.

For American Indians living on or near a reservation, the situation appears much worse (see Graph 8). The reasons are largely those discussed above - a lack of economic development,

distance from economic centers, the lack of resource-rich lands, and, often, the lack of jobs that provide long-term employment. Comparative estimates of the working poor by race for Oregon do not exist. However, based on data from the 1998 Oregon Population Survey, 6.8 percent of all Oregonians who indicated they were working had a gross household income less than the national poverty level.

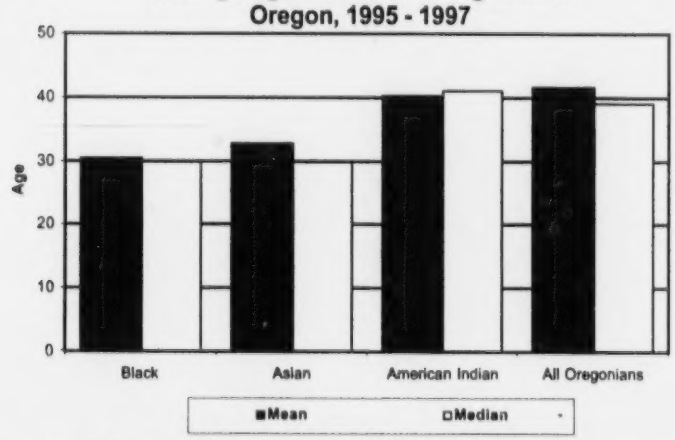
Age and Race

Oregon's minority populations are younger than the average for all Oregonians (see Graph 9). This is due to the decreasing birth rate of White women relative to minority women, and to the younger average age of adult minority in-migrants (see Graph 10).

The fact that minorities have a higher proportional representation in Oregon's younger population, have a higher rate of natural increase than Whites, and are migrating to Oregon at a proportionally greater rate than Whites, indicates that the minority population will continue to grow at a greater rate than Whites. According to data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, half of Oregon's Black population is less than 30 years of age. For Asians and American Indians, the percentages are slightly less, 44 percent and 45 percent, respectively. Comparatively, 39 percent of all Oregonians are below the age of 30. Although Blacks compose only 1.7 percent of the population, they compose 2.3 percent of the under-30 population. For Asians and American Indians, the difference is not as great, but the same relationship exists.

GRAPH 10

Average Age of ADULT In-migrants to Oregon, 1995 - 1997



Source: 1998 Oregon In-migration Study

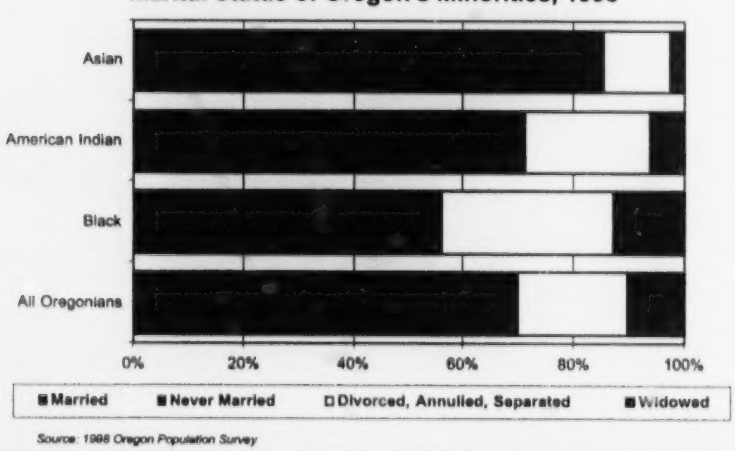
Marital Status and Poverty

Using data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, marital status of Oregon's minorities, 25 years of age or older, was examined. The data show that there are several pronounced differences between Oregon's racial minority populations with respect to marriage (see Graph 11). This is most pronounced in the Black population. Blacks are less than half as likely to be married as are Asians or American Indians. Blacks are also more likely than Asians, Indians, or all Oregonians to be divorced or separated. Asians, American Indians, and all Oregonians are equally likely to be married. Asians were the least likely to be widowed. This is probably due to the large number of recent Asian immigrants who are young adults.

Marital status is an important factor in household income levels, especially when the household includes children. Simply put, a household headed by a married couple has two potential incomes and thus a greater probability of being above the poverty level than does a one-adult household. According to Mishel et al (1999), the family type most vulnerable to poverty are female-headed with children. Nationally, in 1997, 41 percent of female-headed families were below the poverty level compared to 7.1 percent of married-couple families (Mishel et al 1999). Data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey* also show substantial disparity in the poverty rate between married and non-married adults. Only about five percent of married people have a household income below the national poverty level (Graph 12). Comparatively, the percentage of those living below the poverty level is much greater among those who have never been married, are divorced, separated, or had their marriage annulled, or are widowed.

GRAPH 11

Marital Status of Oregon's Minorities, 1998



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Profile

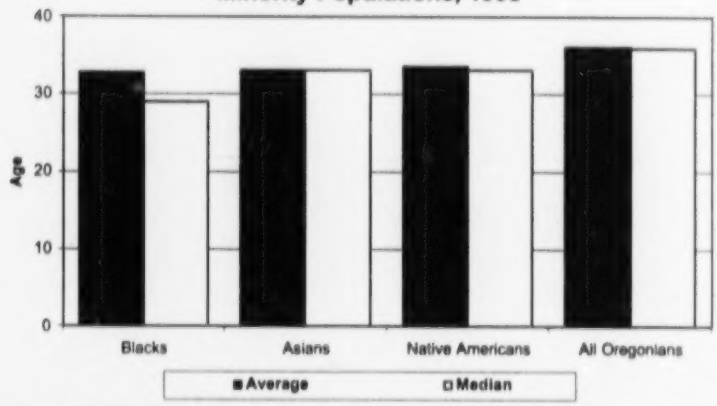
Jackie Scott

Jackie was born in Seattle and moved to Portland with his parents and six brothers and sisters when he was seven. He has a son and daughter of his own and has been married 26 years. Jackie worked for U.S. West for 30 years and, although only 51 years old, is retired from this career. He continues to work as an assistant pastor and teacher in his community and is fondly referred to as "Dr. Scott." Jackie spends most of his free time reading.

Jackie began his second career just a few months ago. In August 1999 he took a position with the Urban League of Portland as a tobacco prevention specialist. This position is newly created and is an outcome of the 1998 settlement between the tobacco industry and the consortium of state attorneys general. Jackie is responsible for a number of special projects, including 1 raising the awareness of minors to the dangers of smoking; 2 working with the community to limit children's access to tobacco products; and 3 limiting the exposure of children to tobacco advertising. The presentation and people skills he has developed as a pastor and teacher are Jackie's most important tools to perform his job. He says the special challenge of this position is to make kids aware that, although they feel no

GRAPH 12

Average and Median Age of Oregon's Minority Populations, 1998



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Differences in the rate of adult poverty by marital status are certainly substantial, however, they pale in comparison to the degree by which child poverty is affected by marital status. Poverty is of much greater likelihood when there is only one wage earner in a household (Colker, 1997). In the U.S. the number of children living with a single mother increased from 7.5 million in 1970 to 13.5 million in 1998. Of these children, almost 70 percent live in poverty (Colker, 1997). For each year a child lives in poverty, the likelihood that he/she will perform below grade level increases by two percent (Reeves 1988). Reeves (1998) also notes that, if a poor child attends a school with a large proportion of poor children, the likelihood of school failure is even greater. The impact that poverty may have on the educational development and future employment opportunities of Oregon's children is clearly substantial. Disproportionately, these children live in single-parent households. According to data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, more than 60 percent of Black children and a little less than 30 percent of all Oregon children live in a single-parent household. Although data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey* do not show as high a level of child poverty for single parent households as Colker (1997) found nationally for female-headed households, it is still substantial (40 percent). Comparatively, only 10 percent of Oregon children who live in a married-parent household live in poverty.

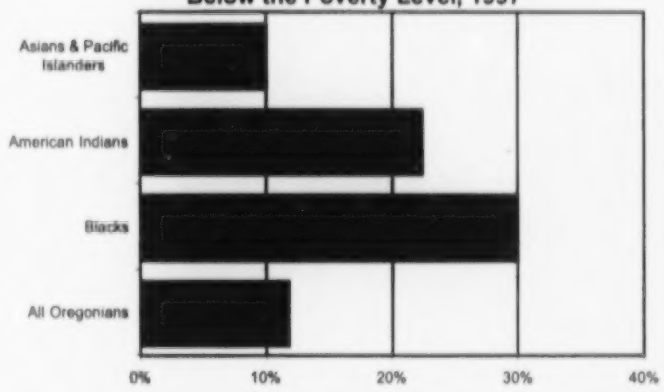
It is common knowledge that poverty in the U.S. is not evenly distributed by age, gender, or race. A much greater proportion of children, elderly, women, and non-Asian minorities live in poverty than do working-age adults, men, or Whites. With respect to race, data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey* show that Oregon is no exception (see Graph 13). In fact, the survey shows that the 1998 poverty rate of Oregon Blacks (30%) is identical to the 1989 national poverty rate for Blacks. This is largely explained by the

adverse effects now, long-term tobacco use can lead to serious health problems and is often a gateway to more dangerous use.

Jackie says his current line of work is perfect for someone in his situation, his children are grown and he is receiving stable income through his retirement plan. He feels, however, there is an inherent lack of stability in private non-profit work and thinks young people just entering the workforce should look to the private for-profit sector to start their careers. He feels that working for a company like U.S. West will provides the stability necessary for young people to comfortably raise their family. In addition, Jackie feels that working in such a technology-driven industry will keep the individual up-to-date on changing technology. For those wishing to be successful in their career, Jackie says they must be willing to be mobile and be enthusiastic about learning new technologies and new skills.

GRAPH 13

Proportion of Oregon's Minority Populations Below the Poverty Level, 1997



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

relatively large number of single-parent Black households. According to the U.S. Census Bureau report, *We the Americans: Blacks*, the 1989 median income for Black families maintained by women was only $12,520, 55 percent of the $22,430 median income for all Black families. The median income of Black married-couple families was relatively similar to the all-household median family income ($33,540 vs. $36,598). Although the median family income of Black married-couple families increased by 15 percent between 1979 and 1989, the median family income of all Black families increased by only six percent. This was due to the increase in the number of female-headed Black families and to the often low incomes earned by the women who headed these families (U.S. Census Bureau, 1993).

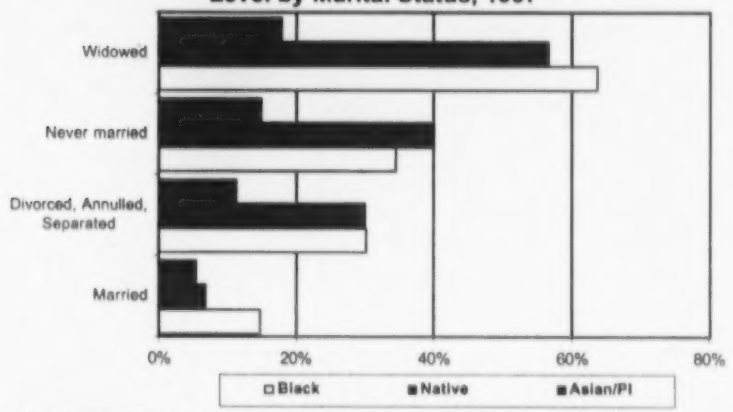
The percentage of American Indians living in poverty, although lower than Blacks, is still high (22%). There are several reasons for this high rate. First, as mentioned earlier, many American Indians live on or near reservations, which often offer little in the way of economic opportunity. Even for those Indians who are employed, poverty rates are very high (see Graph 8). Like other rural workers, work for reservation Indians is often linked with natural resource industries, which have been declining the past few years. Work is also often seasonal, which is typically lower paying and less reliable and, therefore, associated with higher rates of unemployment. As stated earlier, close cultural ties to land means where work takes place may be more important than what the work is. Therefore, relocation to find higher paying jobs may not be considered an option by many American Indians. Second, there may be less of an inclination among many American Indians to get as "wrapped up in professional achievement and wealth" as among other Americans. Traditionally, American Indians have focused on being, and have viewed gaining of wealth as an indicator of false status (Means

1983). For mainstream American culture, accumulation of wealth is often viewed as a way to show ourselves and others that we are successful.

Much, but not all, of the explanation of differences in poverty rates for Oregon's adult minorities is due to differences in marital status between the groups. Graph 14 illustrates the relationship between poverty and race and marital status. Although Graph 14 certainly shows that race and poverty are correlated, with Asians - independent of marital status - having far lower rates than either Blacks or American Indians, marital status is a much greater predictor of poverty. For example, widowed Blacks are four times as likely to live in poverty as married Blacks and never-married Asians are almost three times as likely to live in poverty as married Asians. Married couples, independent of race, are far less likely to live in poverty than non-married persons. For Blacks this is especially bad news. Not only do Blacks, independent of marital status, have a high rate of poverty, but they are also the least likely of Oregon's minorities to be married, and the most likely to be widowed, divorced, or never married - the groups most likely to live in poverty.

GRAPH 14

Percent of Oregon's Minority Adults Below Poverty Level by Marital Status, 1997



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Educational Attainment

Like poverty, educational attainment differs greatly between Oregon's minorities, with Asians being much more likely to have a greater-than-high-school education (see Table 1). There are several possible reasons for the high level of educational attainment among Asians. First, according to the 1993 Bureau of Census publication, *We The Americans: Asians*, education is highly valued in Asian communities. Second, there is a prevalence of two-adult Asian families, which are more financially able to send a child to

TABLE 1

Educational Attainment of Oregon's Minorities, 1998

	Black	Native	Asian	All Oregonians
Doctorate	1%	2%	4%	1%
Professional or Master's	5%	3%	19%	8%
Bachelor	9%	8%	29%	20%
Associate or 1+ Years of College Completed	29%	31%	28%	31%
High School Diploma or GED	36%	41%	14%	32%
Less than High School Diploma/GED	20%	15%	6%	8%

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

college. And third, a large proportion of Asians living in Oregon were born outside of the U.S. and came here specifically for education and/or were recruited for a job that requires a high level of education. Immigration by Asians to Oregon has grown rapidly with the recent explosion in growth in Oregon's high-tech industries.

According to Hodgkinson, *A Demographic Look at Tomorrow* (1992), poverty, not minority status, seems to be the most reliable predictor of below-average educational performance. For Blacks, lower educational achievement is due at least in part to the high poverty rates associated with the large number of households headed by a single parent.

Another consequence of the extremely low median family income associated with Black households headed by a single parent - and the sheer number of such households - is that, on average, Black households have significantly less opportunity to accumulate net assets as do other households. According to Oliver and Shapiro, *Black Wealth/White Wealth* (1995), net assets is the most significant factor in financing education.

Although Blacks are less likely than all Oregonians to have a bachelor's degree, they are almost as likely to have a graduate or professional degree, indicating that a higher proportion of college-graduate Blacks go on to more school than do all Oregonians. For American Indians, the probable reason for the relatively low percentage of those with an advanced degree is similar to that in the earlier discussion on unemployment. That is, post-high school education most likely requires leaving home and family, and entering an institution with a largely unfamiliar culture. This may be reason enough to deter many Indians. However, in addition, many Indians may not have the financial means to finance education, or may see college education as a preparation for a career that will even further remove them from their culture.

Profile

Carl Wilson

Carl was born in Lubbock, Texas the youngest of five children. Because his father was career military, Carl's family frequently moved while he was growing up. They even lived for a while in Germany. His family finally settled in the Spokane, Washington area, where Carl graduated from high school. A high school athlete, Carl says he has always enjoyed physical activity, and stays fit by running, biking, and doing martial arts. He says he has to stay in shape to keep up with his 3 1/2 year old daughter.

After graduating from high school, Carl worked as a mail sorter for the U.S. Postal Service for two years and United Parcel Service for five years. Currently Carl is a model maker and tool and dye maker for Hewlett Packard, where he has worked for 20 years. Carl credits a mechanical drafting class he took in high school for his occupational interest. Carl says the most challenging part of his job is working with different engineers. He says some are very meticulous while others are not. He stresses that it is important to maintain a professional attitude and work with the engineers to get the job done. To be successful in his career Carl has had to fulfill extensive career development requirements at Hewlett Packard. In fact, Carl went to school full time for five years, while working full time.

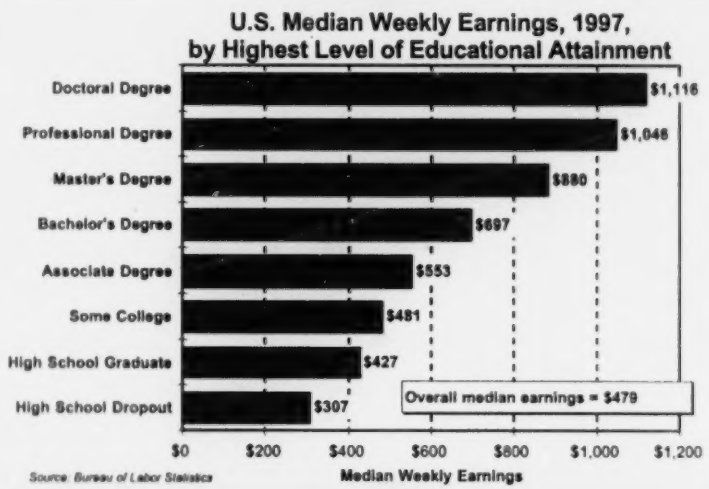
Carl would encourage others to pursue his line of work. He says it is rewarding to see the prototype parts that he builds actually work. In addition, he finds it very exciting to work on the cutting edge of high technology. For those considering a career as a machinist, Carl says he would encourage them to go to college, take a lot of math, and perhaps obtain a machining technician degree.

High School Dropouts

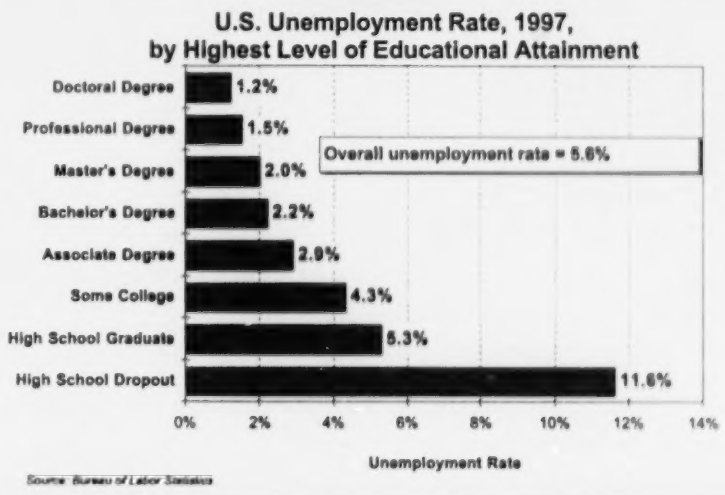
Education is always somewhere on America's political radar screen - usually right in the center. It is recognized by most that education is not only important, it is often the difference between living and living comfortably. Education was very important 20 years ago, it is more important today, and it will be even more important 20 years from now. Just how important is education today? The bottom line is this: not only do high school dropouts earn substantially less than high school graduates, they also experience a much higher rate of unemployment (Graphs 15 and 16).

The differences in high school dropout rates for Oregon minorities follow directly along the same lines as every other social

GRAPH 15

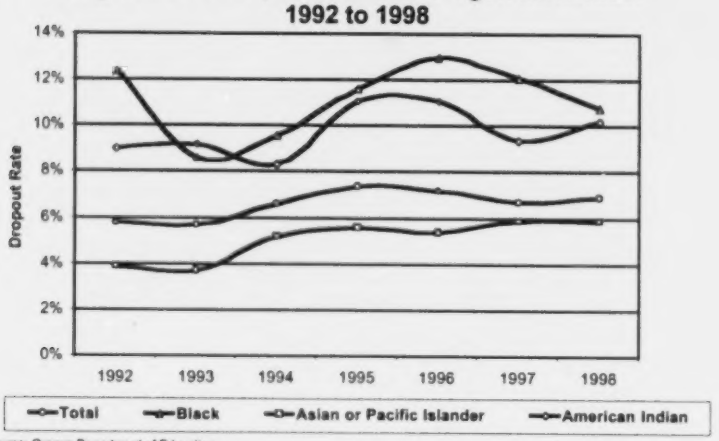


GRAPH 16



GRAPH 17

High School Dropout Rates of Oregon Minorities: 1992 to 1998



Source: Oregon Department of Education

indicator already discussed in this report. Asians are the least likely to drop out of high school and Blacks are the most likely (see Graph 17). American Indians, with drop-out rates just below that of Blacks, are also an at-risk group. Although their rates rose between 1992 and 1998, Asians still drop out at a rate consistently lower than the state average. As Graphs 15 and 16 indicate, one should expect a greater proportion of Asians to be in one of the higher income groups and to spend less time unemployed.

Why do kids drop out of high school? According to data from the Oregon State Board of Education there are a lot of reasons. They differ by racial/ethnic group, and often a student will cite more

TABLE 2

Top 10 Factors Affecting the Decision to Drop Out of 9th through 12th Grades Oregon Public Schools, 1997 - 1998 School Year

	Oregon	Blacks	Asians	American Indians
Percent of Total Dropouts	-	4%	3%	3%
Working more than 15 hours a week	12%	12%	8%	8%
Felt course work was irrelevant	11%	9%	12%	12%
Frequent discipline referrals	9%	7%	4%	11%
Substance abuse	7%	4%	5%	10%
Pregnant or student parent	7%	12%	4%	10%
Felt peer pressure to not achieve	5%	6%	5%	8%
Could not adjust to teaching techniques	4%	4%	4%	2%
Obligation to support family	4%	5%	4%	3%
Frequent health problem	3%	4%	3%	3%

Note: Not every dropout had factors indicated, and more than one factor could be indicated for a dropout.
Source: Oregon Department of Education, Data Information Service, Individual Leaver Report

Profile

Ed Yada

Ed is a retired grocery store manager and charter fishing guide from Newport. Although no longer in the workforce, Ed's work history seems more like the resume of two men, not just one.

Ed was born in Salem, Oregon and grew up with his two brothers and two sisters on his parents' farm. Ed's interest in farming led him to enroll in the agriculture program at Oregon State University in 1940. Unfortunately, the war with Japan interrupted his education. Not long after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Ed and his family were moved to the Tule Lake internment camp - Ed's parents were native-born Japanese. Luckily for Ed, a professor of agricultural sciences at the University of Nebraska sponsored him to come to the University. Ed spent only a couple months at Tule Lake. Ed graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1944 and volunteered into the Army. As with other college graduates, Ed was sent to language school and then to Pearl Harbor. Two days out of Pearl Harbor, en route to the Philippines, Ed learned the Japanese had surrendered. Ed finished out his tour of duty and then returned to the family farm.

Ed's plan to spend his life farming his parents' property ended when his parents, following Japanese

than one reason. Table 2 presents the ten most frequently cited reasons. Asians and American Indians were the most likely to indicate they "felt the coursework irrelevant," American Indians were also likely to cite "frequent discipline referrals." Black students were the most likely to cite "working more than 15 hours per week" or "pregnant or student parent" as a reason for dropping out of high school.

Graphs 15 and 16 clearly show a relationship between the employability and income potential of an individual and his or her educational achievement, with high school dropouts earning the least and being unemployed the most. The data also show that the dropout rates for Blacks and American Indians are substantially greater than for Asians and All Oregonians. The reality is that Oregon's high school dropouts of today will find it especially difficult to succeed in Oregon's job market tomorrow. Since a greater proportion of Blacks and American Indians drop out than do other Oregon students, a greater proportion of these two groups will likely be left with the jobs that pay the least and provide the least amount of employment stability. This scenario is not inevitable. As Table 2 shows, we know why students drop out. We also know which reasons are most prevalent for each minority group. Because of this, intervention can be targeted at each group in a way that addresses its unique situation.

Households and Income

The average number of residents per household appears to differ slightly between Oregon's minority groups. As Graph 18 indicates, American Indians on average have the most occupants per household, and Blacks and Asians have an average rate similar to that of the all-Oregonian average. As stated earlier, Blacks are much more likely to not be married than are other Oregonians, yet the average household size of Blacks is not statistically different from that of all Oregonians. This is indicative of the large percentage of single-parent households in the Black community. The larger average family size for American Indians can be explained by the strong kinship network among the population (i.e., extended family often live together), low housing supply, and low per capita income levels which make it hard to support smaller household family units (Jorgensen, 1986).

As one would expect from the earlier discussion on race and poverty, the median household income of Blacks and American Indians is lower than that of Asians and all Oregonians (see Table 3). Household income includes money earned from jobs; net income from a business, farm, or rent; pensions; dividends; interest; Social Security payments; and any other money income received by members of the household. The median, or midpoint, household income represents the income such that half of all incomes are equal to or greater than it and half are equal to or less than it. Therefore, according to the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, at

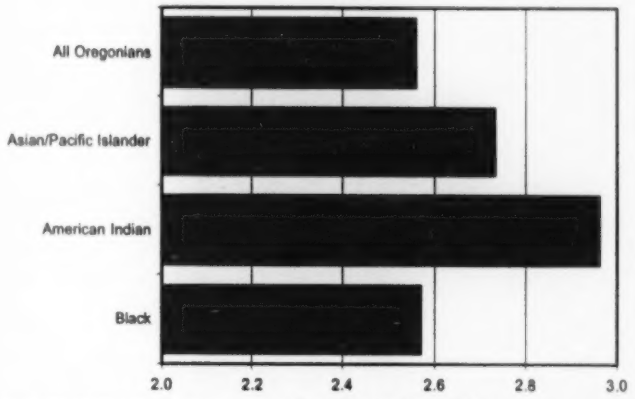
custom, passed the farm to his oldest brother. Ed moved to Portland and opened a small grocery. Ed's tendency toward hard work was well suited to the grocery business, as it was often necessary for him to work 14 or more hours per day. Ed and his wife owned and operated two grocery stores and were raising three children in 1962 when his wife died. Even for a man like Ed, the responsibility of raising three children and running a grocery business became too much. He sold his business in 1966. When his youngest child graduated from high school in 1972, Ed moved his family to Newport, where he and his children had spent their summers for the previous six years.

Ed worked as a commercial fisherman and then as a fishing guide while working full-time at the local Safeway and then as assistant manager of J.C. Market. The ability to spend his mornings fishing was a requirement for him accepting the manager position at J.C. Market. He enjoyed his work so much, and the store owner appreciated his service so much, he stayed 22 years.

Ed says that there is no secret to having a successful business or career. But, you must enjoy what you are doing, you have to be honest and fair with others, and you must take things in stride.

GRAPH 18

Average Size of Oregon's Minority Households, 1998



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

least half of all Black and American Indian households earned less than $25,000 during 1997. Comparatively, during this same period at least half of all Asian families earned more than $35,000.

TABLE 3

1997 Median Household Income, Oregon by Income Range

Blacks	$20,000 to $24,999
American Indians	$20,000 to $24,999
Asians	$35,000 to $44,999
All Oregonians	$35,000 to $44,999

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Table 4 gives a more detailed look at the proportion of households earning different income ranges. The data show that almost 40 percent of Black households earned less than $15,000 during 1997. This is almost twice the percentage of American Indians and almost four times the percentage of Asian households. This is not an Oregon-only phenomenon. According to the Bureau of the Census report, *We the Americans: Blacks*, the large number of Black families maintained by women with no husband present, and the often low incomes of these families, contributed to the lack of improvement in the median family income of Blacks between 1979 and 1989.

According to the Bureau of the Census report, *We the Americans: Asians*, Asians are more likely to participate in the labor force than the population as a whole. Further, the proportion of Asian families nationally with three or more workers was 20 percent in 1989 compared with 13 percent for all families. Asians are also more likely to work in higher-paying occupations, in part because of

TABLE 4

Percent of Oregon Minority Households by Income Level, 1997

	Black	Native	Asian	All Oregonians
Less than $9,999	25%	16%	7%	8%
$10,000 to $14,499	14%	5%	5%	8%
$15,000 to $24,999	16%	31%	15%	14%
$25,000 to $34,999	16%	19%	15%	17%
$35,000 to $44,999	10%	5%	11%	12%
$45,000 to $54,999	6%	6%	14%	12%
$55,000 to $64,999	6%	4%	9%	8%
$65,000 to $84,999	4%	7%	12%	10%
$85,000 to $99,999	1%	1%	5%	3%
$100,000 to $124,999	1%	4%	4%	3%
Over $125,000	1%	2%	5%	4%

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

higher educational attainment. Due largely to these factors, Oregon Asians are less likely than all Oregonians to be in the lowest two income groups and more likely to be in the highest two income groups (see Table 4). Higher marriage rates and the tendency toward extended families may explain why the proportion of American Indian households in the lowest two income groupings is less than that for Blacks.

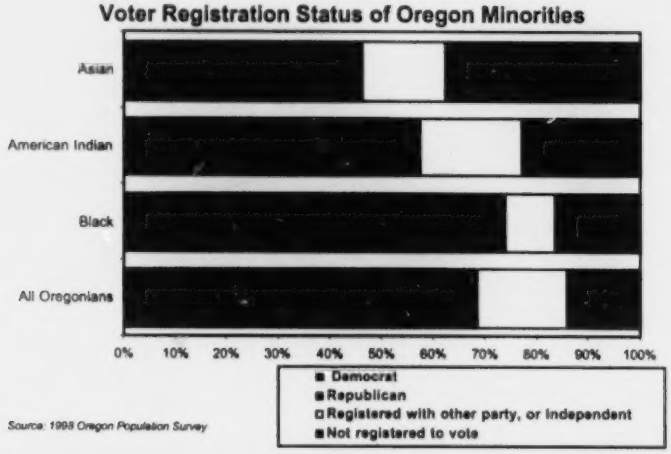
Voting

To varying degrees, Oregon's minority populations tend to favor the Democrat Party. Blacks are far more likely than Oregon's other minorities and all Oregonians to be registered Democrats, and are far less likely to be registered Republicans or be unaffiliated with a party (see Graph 19). Asians are far less likely to be registered to vote than are other minorities or all Oregonians. In fact, nearly 40 percent of Asians were not registered to vote during 1998. Many Asians who have immigrated to Oregon have either not applied for or have not yet been granted citizenship. In addition, many Asians living in Oregon are here on a work visa or as a permanent alien resident. In either case, these individuals are not eligible to vote.

The political power and influence of a group is largely determined by the population of the group and by the group's involvement in the political process. For example, it is well known that the elderly are a growing segment of American society. In addition, relative to younger Americans, older Americans participate in the political process at a high rate, i.e., more of them vote. Because of these two factors, issues important to this group - such as Social Security and Medicare - have become increasingly important in national politics. Like the elderly, minorities are a fast-growing segment of the population. It follows that issues important to minorities and minority activists should become increasingly important in the political arena, especially if minorities participate in the political process at as high of

GRAPH 19

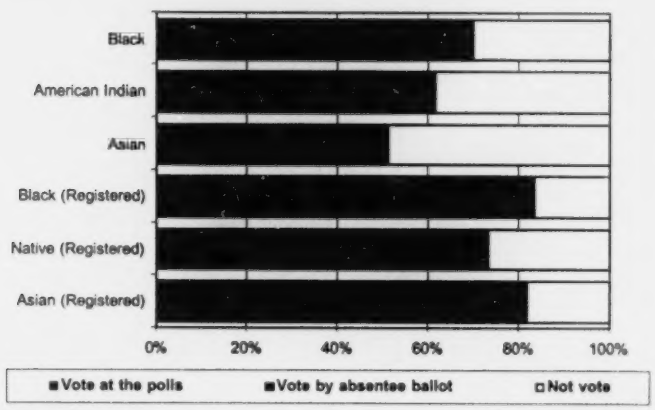
Voter Registration Status of Oregon Minorities



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

GRAPH 20

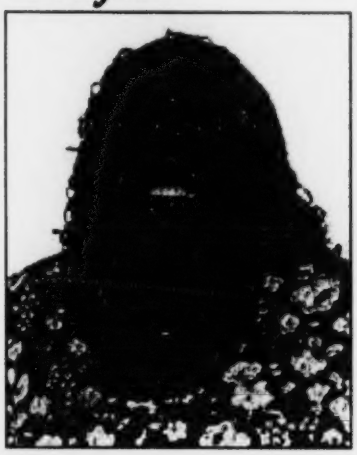
Minority Voting in 1996 Presidential Election



Source: Oregon Population Survey

a rate as older Americans. According to data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, only 51 percent of adult Asians reported voting in the 1996 presidential election (see Graph 20). Blacks and American Indians reported a greater rate of participation, 70 and 62 percent respectively. Remember, though, many Asians are not able to register to vote because they are not citizens. The percentage of all Oregonians who reported voting in the 1996 election (79%) was only a little higher than Blacks. The percentage of **registered voters** who voted in the 1996 presidential election is, of course, higher for each minority group. About 82 percent of registered Asians and Blacks and about 73 percent of registered American Indians reported voting in the 1996 presidential election. Comparatively, 91 percent of all registered Oregonians reported voting in the election. ■

Profile



Nora Colbray

Nora was born in Montgomery, Texas and as a child moved with her mother to California and then to the Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, Washington area looking for work. Although she was an only child and despite the fact that she doesn't look a day over 40, Nora has eight children of her own and 14 grandchildren. Nora says her family provides her with her greatest happiness and she is proud of them all. Her oldest daughter recently graduated with a Ph.D. in theology and is a Pentecostal minister.

Nora enjoys fishing with her husband and youngest children at the local reservoirs, attending church and church functions, cooking for her family, and visiting daily with her mom. She spent most of her adult life as a stay-at-home mom and says she wouldn't trade it for anything. She feels very strongly that, especially for the first six years of a child's life, children need their mom at home with them.

Nora worked as a cashier at the Ft. Lewis commissary and at McCoy Air Force Base, and as a teacher's aid at the Hermiston Junior High School before starting her current job in March 1999. Nora is now a dispatcher of volunteers for the Oregon Department of Human Services. She works 20 hours per week, which is perfect for Nora because it gives her

LABOR FORCE

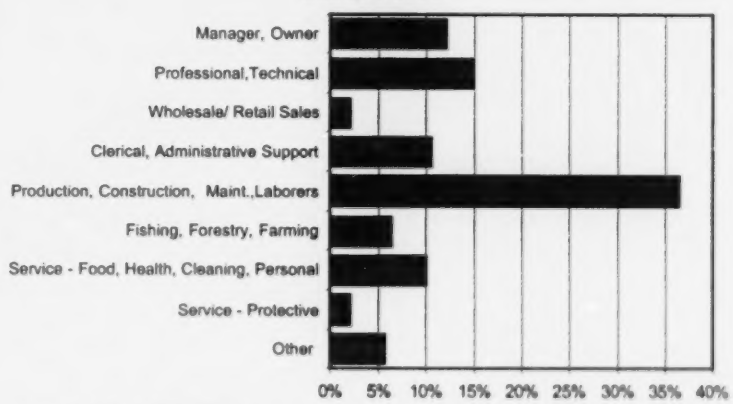
Oregon's minority population plays a critical role in many segments of the state's economy. This is especially the case in the Portland-metro area where 68 percent of Oregon's Asian population and 82 percent of Oregon's Black population live. To a lesser degree, these two groups are an important component of the Willamette Valley economies as well. In certain rural areas of Oregon, American Indians play important roles in local economies. This has increasingly become the case with the advent of Indian gaming casinos. The casinos have become important fixtures in local economies by providing jobs and by attracting tourist dollars. For example, according to information distributed by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, more than $2.5 million is pumped into the local economy each month through the payroll of Spirit Mountain Casino's 1,500 employees.

Occupational Employment

Oregon's minority workforce is represented in every major occupational category. Still, there are often considerable differences between the minority groups in their percentage of employment within a particular occupation. For example, American Indians are far more likely than Blacks or Asians to work in the occupational

GRAPH 21

Occupational Percentages of American Indian Labor Force



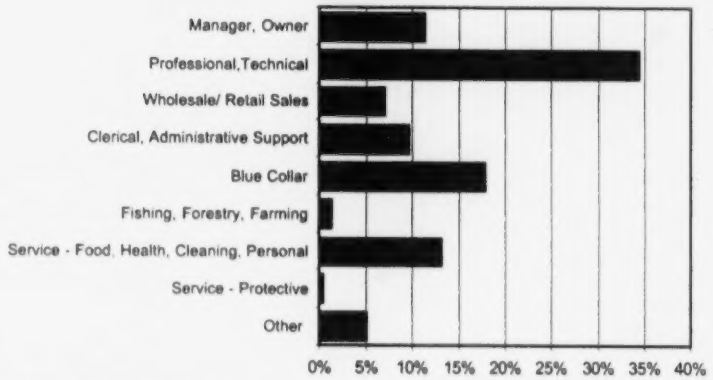
Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

the opportunity to spend time with her family and serve her church. She enjoys the office environment she works in and enjoys working with people, which is a big part of her job.

Nora encourages anyone who enjoys working with others to pursue the human service-style work she is involved in. She advises new entrants to the workforce to work hard, offer encouragement to others, and set goals that provide realistic challenges. Nora also says that young women entering the workforce should pursue careers they enjoy. However, she feels strongly that the career should complement the needs of the woman's family and a career should not be pursued simply for the money or because certain groups in society say they should. Although she feels strongly that work is important, Nora feels that it's better for families and better for society when one parent is home with their young children.

GRAPH 22

Occupational Percentages of Asian Labor Force



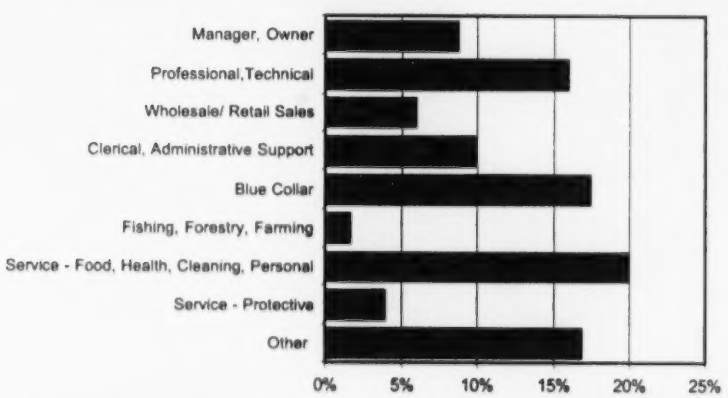
Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

classification that includes craftsmen, production, construction, and maintenance workers. Graphs 21, 22, and 23 present data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey* on the occupational distribution for each minority group.

Asians are far more likely to work in professional or technical occupations than are Blacks and American Indians. Why? As discussed earlier, education is highly valued in Asian communities. This emphasis on education directly translates into employment in those jobs requiring relatively high levels of education (i.e., technical and professional). In addition, more than 50 percent of Oregon's and the nation's Asian population is foreign born. Although many of

GRAPH 23

Occupational Percentages of Black Labor Force



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

these people came to the U.S. as immigrants, an increasingly large percentage are coming as guest workers in response to employment opportunities in the high-tech industry.

According to data from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, American Indians are more than three times as likely to work in the construction industry as are all Oregonians. The construction industry is a highly seasonal industry and is typically marked by project-limited employment. Why do American Indians appear to gravitate toward these jobs? There are probably several reasons.

1. When unemployment is high for a particular population of people or for a particular geographic area, workers are at the mercy of the markets, so the individuals in that population or geographic area will often accept whatever job(s) they can find (Doeringer and Piore, 1975). Often these jobs are seasonal. We see this in many of Oregon's rural areas, where jobs may be tied to extractive industries or tourism. We know unemployment among the Indian labor force is high. American Indians living on or near reservations in Oregon tend to have much higher rates of unemployment than do Oregonians as a whole (see Graph 7). There is evidence to suggest that American Indians in urban areas also experience unemployment at a greater rate than the general population. This is supported by 1990 Bureau of Census data, which estimated the U.S. unemployment rate for 1990 at 6.3 percent and the unemployment rate for American Indians at 14.4 percent - more than double the U.S. average. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 1990 one-third of American Indians lived on or near a reservation and two-thirds were urban dwellers.

2 Numerous studies indicate many American Indians who maintain their primary residence on a reservation are forced to find seasonal work off the reservation (Albers 1974, Jorgensen 1986). For these American Indians, seasonal work may be perceived as the most viable way to maintain important cultural ties and still provide a level of economic stability. Oregon's construction industry has been strong throughout the decade and pays a relatively high hourly wage. This may draw American Indians to the construction industry.

3 Finally, there are Tribal Employment Rights Ordinances (TEROs) between Oregon's tribes and the federal and state government that provide preference of hire for American Indians on transportation-related construction projects within a 60-mile radius of Oregon reservations.

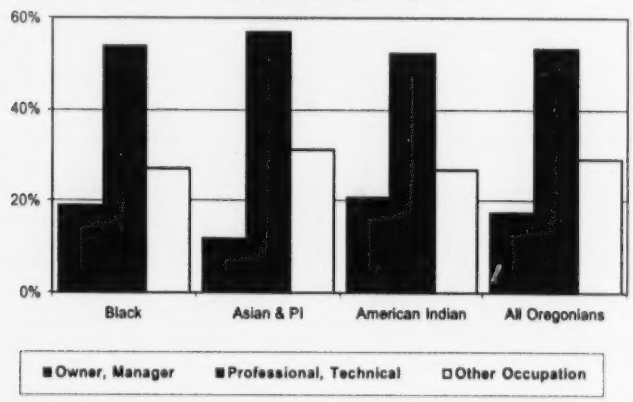
A greater proportion of Blacks work in the service industries - which include protective services, food service, health services, and personal and household services - than do Oregon's other minority

groups. In fact, almost 25 percent of Blacks work in this broad occupational grouping. Comparatively, less than 15 percent of Asians, Indians, or all Oregonians are employed in the service industries. There are two factors that could account for this. Portland is home to almost half of Oregon's total number of jobs in the service sectors, and home to 83 percent of Oregon's Black population. Many of the jobs in the service sectors require no more than a high school education, which is the highest educational attainment of more than 50 percent of Oregon Blacks.

There are both subtle and dramatic differences in minority representation by occupational group. Evidence from the *1998 Oregon Population Survey* suggests that educational attainment within each minority group, as well as the spatial distribution of each group across Oregon, plays a significant role in the occupational choices of members of each minority group. These two ***group characteristics*** are themselves largely due to cultural and social factors, perhaps unique to each minority group. When accounting for educational attainment, differences in occupational choice between Oregon's minority groups almost vanishes. Indeed, as Graph 24 indicates, of those Oregonians with a college education, the percentage of each racial group that is employed in a technical/professional occupation are almost identical.

GRAPH 24

Occupation of Oregon Minorities Who Have at Least a 4-Year College Degree



Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Industry Employment

Like occupational employment, industry employment varies both slightly and significantly between Oregon's minorities. We can again expect education and geographic location to play a large part in the proportional employment of minorities. For example, since more than 80 percent of Oregon's Black population lives in the Portland-metro area, we would not expect a large percentage of the Black labor force to be employed in wood products manufacturing, a mostly rural-based industry.

Table 5 displays the percentage employment of minorities by industry. As expected, Blacks - a mostly urban population - have a low percentage of employment in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries, relative to Asians and Indians. Asians - the best educated of any Oregon racial group - are far more likely to be employed in the high tech manufacturing industry. As mentioned earlier, American Indians are highly represented in the construction industry. The data show Blacks are far more likely to work in public or private education than are Asians, Indians, or all Oregonians. It may be that professional Blacks tend toward teaching and administrative positions. A contributing factor may also be this industry's history of strong affirmative action programs.

TABLE 5

Percent Industry Employment of Oregon Minorities

	Black	Asians & Pac. Island.	American Indians	All Oregonians
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries	1.9%	5.5%	7.1%	5.5%
Construction, Mining	5.1%	3.9%	26.5%	8.0%
Durable Manufacturing - Lumber & Wood Products	0.8%	0.8%	1.7%	3.5%
Durable Manufacturing - High Technology	2.6%	8.6%	0.3%	2.9%
Durable Manufacturing - All Other	2.0%	3.5%	3.7%	3.5%
Nondurable Manufacturing - Food, Textile, Apparel, Paper	1.8%	3.1%	1.7%	2.0%
Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities	4.6%	1.9%	3.1%	4.1%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	12.9%	17.2%	11.1%	15.4%
Education - Public & Private	19.0%	6.5%	4.9%	6.9%
Federal Government	3.5%	2.2%	5.1%	1.5%
State Government	4.2%	2.5%	0.5%	2.7%
City, County, Local Government	3.6%	2.1%	6.2%	2.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	4.8%	8.0%	1.9%	5.6%
Services - Business	7.6%	12.7%	6.0%	10.0%
Services - Private Health, Social	13.0%	9.7%	10.5%	11.8%
Services - Personal	6.3%	3.4%	3.3%	4.4%
Services - Entertainment And Recreation	1.1%	0.7%	2.3%	1.7%
Armed Forces	-	-	0.4%	0.3%
Other - Classification Uncertain	5.1%	7.7%	3.6%	7.8%

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Profile

Tinh Nguyen

Tinh was born in 1970 in Vietnam and moved to the U.S. with his parents and five siblings when he was four years old. Still single, Tinh is a sports fan who spends his free time playing golf and traveling. He is a graduate of Willamette University, where he majored in business and was a varsity quarterback.

Tinh is a financial consultant with SmithSalomonBarney in downtown Portland. He says he is doing well, and feels very much at home working closely with top-caliber stockbrokers and financial consultants around the country. Still in his first job out of college, Tinh has worked himself up the corporate ladder, starting as an assistant branch manager six years ago. He chose this line of work because he enjoys the professional environment and his job keeps him caught up with business, government, and politics. Tinh also enjoys working with and providing services to clients.

Tinh works far more than 40 hours per week. He comes to work at 5:30 each morning and usually doesn't leave until 6:00 in the evening. The biggest challenge in his job is making business contacts and building his client base. Due to the nature of the business, Tinh cannot become content with the status quo - he must continually increase his customer base. Fortunately, more and more of his clients come to him through referrals from current and past clients. Tinh would encourage others to look into financial consulting as a profession, but only if they have a very competitive personality, have excellent communication skills, and are people oriented. For those who think they have what it takes to be a financial consultant, Tinh recommends building a good resume and a large network of potential clients.

Employer Type

Like industry and occupational employment, there are differences in the employer type of each minority group (see Table 6). Asians are more likely to work for private for-profit businesses than are other Oregonians. This is probably due, at least in part, to the large number of Asians recruited from overseas by American firms. Blacks are more likely to work in non-profit organizations and government than are other Oregonians, and are the least likely to be self-employed. The percentages of American Indians in each employer type is almost exactly the same as the percentages of all Oregonians.

TABLE 6

Employer Type, Oregon 1998

	Black	Asian & Pacific Island	Native Americans	All Oregonians
Private for-profit business	61%	68%	61%	62%
Private not-for-profit organization	10%	6%	7%	7%
Local, State, Federal Government	19%	14%	14%	14%
Self-employed	5%	8%	12%	13%
Other	5%	3%	5%	4%

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Wages

According to the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, there are substantial differences in the average wage earned by Oregon's minorities. Table 7 presents the estimated average wage in 1998 for each minority group and the 95 percent confidence interval for the true mean wage. In addition, the estimated median wage for each minority group is included. It is important to view these estimated mean wages in the context of the upper and lower bounds of the 95 percent confidence interval. For example, the estimated mean wage of American Indians is $20.35, but the bounds in which the true mean wage is contained - with 95 percent confidence - range from $9.02 up to $31.68. So, the data actually tell us very little about the average wage of American Indians. For Blacks and Asians, as well as for all Oregonians, the data are much more revealing. The average wage of Asians is not statistically different from that of all Oregonians, however the average wage of Blacks is statistically lower than that of all Oregonians and Asians.

TABLE 7

Average and Median 1998 Hourly Wage

	Mean	Lower 95% CI*	Upper 95% CI*	Median
Black	$12.04	$10.95	$13.13	$11.48
Asian	$16.79	$14.79	$18.78	$13.00
American Indian	$20.35	$9.02	$31.68	$15.53
All Oregonians	$14.40	$13.79	$15.04	$12.00

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey
**The confidence interval (CI) is the range of values of the population parameter that we are 95% certain contains the true parameter value (average hourly wage).*
NOTE: Standard Errors and Confidence Intervals calculated in WESVAR, so they are "correct".

Job Satisfaction

We have shown that there are differences in the distribution of minorities by occupation and industry (Graphs 21 - 23, Table 5). And we have shown that there are differences in the average wages earned by each minority group. According to the *1998 Oregon Population Survey*, there is little or no difference between Oregon's racial minorities in their level of job satisfaction (see Table 8). Why is this interesting? According to a September 1999 study by the Oregon Employment Department and released to the press by the Oregon Progress Board, job satisfaction is strongly related to wages and occupation. Despite the fact that there are differences in the distribution of each racial group by occupation and there are differences in the average wages of each racial group, there is apparently not a substantial difference in the job satisfaction between each racial group.

TABLE 8

Job Satisfaction of Oregon's Minority Workforce

	Black	American Indian	Asian	All Oregonians
Very satisfied	47%	51%	40%	44%
Moderately satisfied	40%	38%	48%	42%
A little dissatisfied	8%	6%	10%	10%
Very dissatisfied	5%	4%	2%	4%

Source: 1998 Oregon Population Survey

Unemployment

Due to the relatively small sizes of their populations, national and state labor force information for Asians and American Indians is not available through the U.S. Census Bureau's monthly Current Population Survey (CPS). However, using the CPS, the Black unemployment rate for Oregon in 1998 was estimated at 6.6 percent, one percentage point higher than the all Oregonian estimate. This estimate should be viewed with skepticism however, as the 90 percent confidence interval is very wide (1.8 % to 11.4 %).

Another source of data provides some evidence of the comparable unemployment rates of Oregon's minority groups. The American Community Survey, a new survey being developed by the U.S. Census Bureau and designed to provide up-to-date census-like data for communities, includes Multnomah County as one of its ongoing test areas. Although the survey was conducted in 1996, 1997, and 1998, the 1998 data have not yet been published and the sample size for the 1997 is small. Data from the 1996 survey was used to calculate unemployment rates for Multnomah County's total workforce, as well as for the county's minority workforce.

TABLE 9

Unemployment Rates of Multnomah County Minorities, 1996

	Unemployment Rate
Blacks	8.1%
American Indians	8.7%
Asians & Pacific Islanders	4.0%
All Multnomah County Residents	4.6%

Source: 1996 American Community Survey, U.S. Bureau of Census

This one-county unemployment rate is useful because three out of four Oregon Blacks and one of every three Oregon Asians live in Multnomah County. Thus, knowing the unemployment rate of Blacks and Asians in Multnomah County provides a reasonable estimate of the statewide unemployment rates of these two groups. Since only about 16 percent of Oregon's American Indian population live in Multnomah County, the unemployment rate for this group is not a good proxy for the statewide unemployment rate of American Indians.

As one might expect, Asians have a much lower unemployment rate than do Blacks or American Indians, and a slightly lower rate than the all Multnomah County residents estimate (see Table 9). The validity of the Multnomah County unemployment rate for Asians at 4.0 percent is corroborated by the BLS estimated 1997 national unemployment rate of 3.8 percent for foreign-born Asians and 4.7 percent for native-born Asians. The Black unemployment

rate is slightly higher than the 1998 BLS statewide estimate for Blacks of 6.6 percent. However it is well within the range of the BLS 90 percent confidence interval and is very close to the 1998 national Black unemployment rate of 8.9 percent.

The quality and availability of labor force data are directly proportional to the size of the population in question and to political concerns. This is especially true when dealing with unemployment rates, which require costly in-depth monthly surveys. Because Asians have historically constituted a very small percentage of the U.S. population and because every quantifiable indicator suggests that Asians are doing as well as or better than any other of America's racial minority populations, there has been no concerted effort to compile labor force statistics on this population. Labor force data on American Indians are also often of poor quality, but for a different reason. Although the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) does track labor force statistics at the reservation level, American Indians comprise a small - and unevenly distributed - portion of the population. This makes it difficult for the Bureau of Labor Statistics or U.S. Bureau of the Census to collect meaningful local or national labor force statistics on this group. Among minority groups, labor force statistics are most abundant for Blacks. This is due mainly to the fact that Blacks are the largest of the three racial minority populations in the U.S. ■

Profile

Cedric Wildbill

Cedric Wildbill was born and spent his early years in Pendleton, Oregon, the oldest of four brothers and one adopted sister. His family moved to Portland in 1969 so his father could obtain work, but returned to Pendleton in 1977. Cedric graduated from Pendleton Senior High and completed a degree program at Mt. Hood Community College in the field that has interested him since childhood, television production technology.

His first job in this field was as a media specialist in 1992 for Boeing, which operated an American Indian mentoring program sponsored by the Department of Energy. He says this job was his greatest professional challenge. The work was varied and everything was new. Although the program lasted only two years, Cedric was responsible for setting up more than 250 press conferences across the Northwest for state and U.S. senators, governors, secretaries of state, the vice president, and others. Besides setting up each of these press conferences, he was also the frontline person dealing with newspaper, radio, and TV reporters. In 1994 Cedric left this position and headed back to Pendleton, where he accepted a position with the Wildhorse Gaming Resort as the director of surveillance. Although his desire to work with cameras drew him to the position, he spent much of his time doing paperwork.

While working at the Wildhorse Resort, Cedric and his new wife, Tania, started their own film company, Wildbill Productions, and in 1996 Cedric left the Wildhorse Resort to focus all his energy into his film company. The hard work recently paid off. A documentary film Cedric has wanted to produce for many years came to fruition in the summer of 1999. The film, American Cowboys, is about two early 20th century rodeo cowboys from the Pendleton region, Jackson Sundown and George Fletcher. Both of these cowboys won recognition in the world's most prestigious rodeo event - the Pendleton Roundup.

This story deviates from the typical cowboy story in that Jackson Sundown was Indian and George Fletcher was Black. Although this might be the appeal for much of the documentary's audience, Cedric made this film for much more personal reasons. An elderly George Fletcher was one of his family's neighbors in the late 1960s and Cedric used to ride on his lap as George told him stories about himself, Jackson Sundown, and the old days in Pendleton.

Although he knew he had a story worth telling, Cedric says he is very thankful to Oregon Public Broadcasting and American Indian Public Telecommunications for providing funding for the film. And how good is the film? Well, it won Best Public Television Documentary at the Great Plains Film Festival in August 1999. Cedric's new goal is to turn the documentary into a full-length, feature film.

Cedric says that he credits his success to his wife, parents, and others who have mentored and encouraged him, and doing what he loves to do. Although every day has brought him new challenges, the fact that he enjoys his work has made it possible to persevere and prosper.

Profile

Lynn Sampson

Lynn was born in Toledo, Oregon and is a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz. As an infant, she moved to eastern Oregon with her family, where she still resides. She has five grown children and two grandchildren who reside in the Pendleton area. Her spare time is usually spent with her family. Lynn states that family, friends, and acquaintances would probably describe her as being highly motivated, focused and determined, skills that have served her well in business. Prior to opening her business in 1996, she had worked as an office nurse/ certified medical assistant (CMA) for nine years.

Lynn's current business, Advanced Business Intervention, is a third party administrator specializing in the detection and prevention of substance abuse in the workplace. She offers nationwide service, and states that no business is too small, or too large, for her company to service. She is affiliated with certified accredited labs and medical review officers, and stays in compliance with governmental as well as private-sector rules and regulations. When asked what drove her to this particular business she replies that her own experience in an abusive, alcoholic relationship opened her eyes to the situation.

Like other business owners, Lynn confirms that there are some distinct

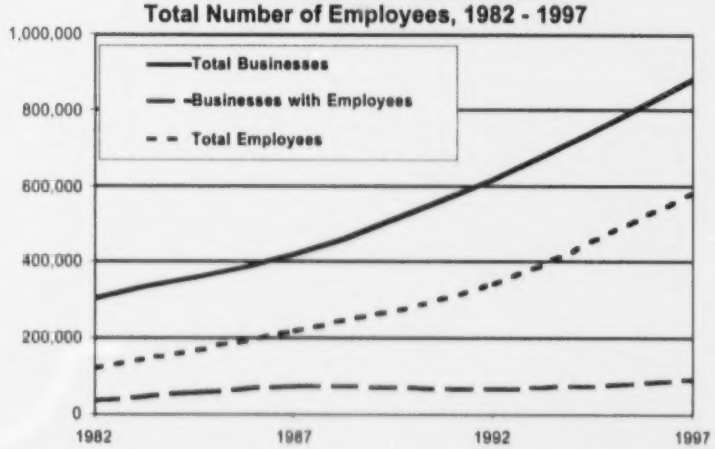
Business Ownership

For many Americans, being an employee is not enough: they want to be the boss. The most direct way to become the boss is by starting one's own business. That is what Americans are doing in record numbers. According to data from the Small Business Administration (SBA), there were 885,416 new firms reporting employees in 1997, and there are approximately 24 million small businesses in the U.S today. The SBA also reports that small businesses:

- Provide virtually all of the net new jobs added to the U.S. economy;
- Represent 99.7 percent of all employers;
- Employ 38 percent of the private workers in high-tech occupations;
- Provide 47 percent of all sales in the country;
- Provide 55 percent of innovations;
- Account for 35 percent of federal contract dollars;
- Are home-based 35 percent of the time and are franchises three percent of the time;
- Represent 96 percent of all U.S. exporters, but not of total exports.

GRAPH 25

Number of Black Owned Businesses and Total Number of Employees, 1982 - 1997



Source: U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, based on data from the U.S. Department of Commerce

advantages to being one's own boss. She enjoys making her own schedule, conducting business in her own way, meeting people, helping to develop policies and procedures, and implementing programs that successfully send the message that drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace will not be tolerated. In addition, she states that owning her own business has given her much personal gratification and a better quality of life. She has devoted a great deal of time and money to her business to make it the success that it has become. Would she recommend others pursue business ownership? Definitely, as long as you're the type that can stay focused, do not easily give up, and are not afraid to ask for help.

Minority Businesses in the U.S.

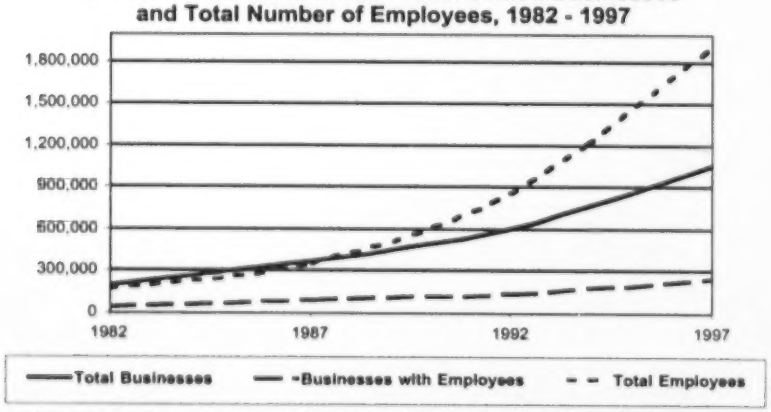
For minorities, the rate of growth in new businesses is staggering (see Graphs 25 and 26). During the ten-year period 1988 through 1997, the number of minority-owned businesses in the U.S. grew by 168 percent, to 3.25 million businesses (including Hispanic-owned businesses). These businesses generated $495 billion in revenue and employed nearly four million workers (Minorities in Business, SBA Office of Advocacy). Of the 3.25 million minority-owned businesses, 1.1 million were Asian- or American Indian-owned (Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, and Alaskan natives are included under Asian/American Indian) and 880,000 were Black owned. The remaining 1.4 million were Hispanic owned. Although Asian- and American Indian-owned businesses represent only one-third of all minority-owned businesses, in 1997 they accounted for $275 billion (56%) of all-minority business revenue and employed almost two million workers. In contrast, Black-owned businesses earned $59 billion in revenue during 1997 and employed almost 600,000.

According to the *1992 Characteristics of Business Owners Survey*, 75.5 percent of all firms operating in 1992 were still operating in 1996. Comparatively, approximately 69 percent of all Black-owned firms and 79 percent of all Asian- and American Indian-owned firms operating in 1992 were still operating in 1996. Survival rates of minority businesses with employees were considerably higher: almost 87 percent of Black-owned employer businesses and 92 percent of Asian/American Indian-owned employer businesses operating in 1992 were operating in 1996.

According to *Minorities in Business 1999*, recent Asian immigration may account for much of the increase in the number of Asian-owned businesses. The logic is that, like those in other large

GRAPH 26

Number of Asian/American Indian Owned Businesses and Total Number of Employees, 1982 - 1997



Source: U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, based on data from the U.S. Department of Commerce

GRAPH 27

Number of Blacks and Asians/American Indians Citing Self Employment as Primary Occupation, 1982 - 1998

Source: U.S. SBA, Office of Advocacy, from data provided by the U.S. Dept. of Labor, BLS

migrations of people to the U.S., many Asian immigrants view business ownership as their most viable way to earn a living.

Although Blacks comprise 13 percent and Asians and American Indians comprise a combined four percent of the U.S. total population, they each comprise about five percent of the total number of Americans who report self-employment as their primary occupation. As Graph 27 shows, the number of Blacks and Asians/American Indians who report business ownership as their primary occupation has increased over the period from 1982 through 1998 at a rate greater than that for all business owners.

Minority Businesses in Oregon

Like the rest of the country, Oregon has seen recent rapid growth in the number of minority-owned businesses. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's *Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises*, Black-owned businesses in Oregon increased by 71 percent and Asian- and American Indian-owned businesses increased by 62 percent between 1987 and 1992. During this same period Black-owned businesses increased by 46 percent nationally and Asian/American Indian-owned firms increased by 61 percent.

According to the 1992 survey, Oregon had 1,447 Black-owned businesses and 5,414 Asian-owned businesses in 1992. In 1992 seven Oregon counties had 100 or more minority-owned businesses (see Table 10). All of these counties are in western Oregon and six were Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) counties in 1992. Today all seven are MSA counties since Benton county was designated an MSA county in 1999.

TABLE 10

Oregon Counties with 100 or More Minority-Owned Firms: 1992

	Number of Firms	Sales & Receipts ($1,000)	Number of Firms with Paid Employees	Sales & Receipts ($1,000)	Number of Employees	Annual Rayroll
Benton	144	$13,161	25	$8,748	216	$2,561
Clackamas	478	$126,563	154	$101,184	821	$11,107
Jackson	131	$25,520	47	$22,276	226	$3,625
Lane	290	$52,262	100	$47,204	834	$8,305
Marion	188	$22,360	53	$14,506	334	$3,416
Multnomah	2,079	$438,002	652	$376,869	4,006	$55,234
Washinton	1,282	$222,284	300	$166,601	1,547	$22,811

Source: Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Minority businesses can be found in all major industry groups in Oregon (Table 11). Still, the vast majority of these businesses are in two industry categories: services and retail trade. Almost half of all minority-owned firms are in the service sector. More than 70 percent are either in the service or retail trade business, businesses that generally require low capital investment. Of those minority-owned firms with paid employees, 36 percent are in services and almost 80 percent are in either retail trade or services. In comparison, Oregon Employment Department data indicate that approximately 34 percent of all business units with employees covered by unemployment insurance were in the service sector and 54 percent of units were in either services or retail.

According to 1992 U.S. Census Bureau data, minority-owned businesses are not a significant source of employment in Oregon. Only about one percent of the just over one million private industry jobs in Oregon in 1992 were with a minority-owned business. The

TABLE 11

Minority* Owned Businesses by Industry Type, Oregon 1992

	Number of Firms	Sales & Receipts ($1,000)	Number of Firms with Paid Employees	Sales & Receipts ($1,000)	Number of Employees	Annual Payroll
Agricultural Services, Forestry, Fishing, Mining	120	$6,596	19	$2,905	50	$700
Construction	280	$40,836	80	$36,681	324	$6,805
Manufacturing	255	$65,517	85	$62,716	498	$9,567
Transportation and Public Utilities	150	$21,514	33	$16,376	128	$2,645
Wholesale Trade	283	$320,191	99	$301,363	730	$16,365
Retail Trade	1596	$405,991	755	$341,809	4978	$45,152
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	563	$55,302	68	$22,936	329	$3,000
Services	3312	$234,226	673	$183,514	3954	$59,807
Industries Not Classified	302	$19,944	32	$11,550	46	$460

** Incudes Asian, American Indian, and Black Owned Businesses*
Sources: Surveys of Minority-Owned Businesses, U.S. Bureau of the Census

Census Bureau 1997 Economic Census, which collects data on minority-owned businesses, has not yet been released. It is likely that the number of minority-owned businesses in Oregon, as well as the number of people working for a minority-owned business, grew considerably between 1992 and 1997. It is quite probable that the share of total employment that minority-owned business comprises also has risen. Why should we expect this? First, minority-owned business in Oregon grew at the phenomenal rate of 64 percent between 1987 and 1992. With the strong economic growth in Oregon since 1991, and the strong growth in the state's minority population over the past ten years, we should expect at least as much growth in minority-owned businesses between 1992 and 1997 as in the prior five years. Second, according to a 1999 report by the Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy, the number of minority-owned businesses in the U.S. grew by 168 percent between 1987 and 1997, while employment by minority-owned businesses grew more than twice as fast at 362 percent. There is no reason to expect that these national trends are not also occurring in Oregon.

Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs

Professional assistance is the first step to realizing the dream of business ownership for most prospective entrepreneurs. For minority Oregonians interested in starting a business, the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) may be the place to start. Formed in 1987, OAME is a non-profit organization with a current membership of more than 450 individuals and businesses. OAME's mission is to develop the entrepreneurial skills of ethnic minorities, as well as promote economic development within Oregon's minority communities. OAME works as a partnership between minority entrepreneurs, educational institutions, government, communities, and established businesses. The underlying philosophy of OAME is that economic development and the creation of wealth and jobs is central to the development of communities. OAME views business ownership opportunities for minorities as the most direct way to achieve economic development and positively affect communities. In order to encourage business ownership, OAME provides technical services, aids in accessing capital and loans, and provides various administrative services to small businesses throughout Oregon. ■

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1 A unit (or reporting unit) is defined as the level at which employment and payroll information is reported. A company which has only one location in Oregon, would have only one reporting unit. For those companies in Oregon that do business in more than one location, the number of reporting units will reflect the number of business units.

Profile

Cheryll & Harold Brookins

Long-term residents of Seattle, Cheryll and Harold moved to Vancouver, Washington in 1989. Harold retired in 1999 from a 30-year career with U.S. West and Cheryll, also with 30 years of service to U.S West, plans on retiring in 2001. They have four grown children, a grown niece, and eight grandchildren. Both Cheryll and Harold are actively involved in the Portland community and the United Methodist Church, as well as in local political and union organizations.

Over his 30-year career with U.S. West, Harold held many jobs related to information technology, most recently as a computer technician. Cheryll has worked in many fields also, most recently as a screening consultant, which she describes as the person who is called in when the computer cannot figure out what is wrong with your phone.

Cheryll and Harold opened Alarm Tracks in 1996. Alarm Tracks installs and repairs security alarm systems for businesses and residences, as well as other security equipment including close-circuit television cameras, medical alert systems, and smoke detectors. In addition, their company provides consulting services for home and business owners on common sense ways to protect themselves and their property. Since he's retired, Harold performs the day-to-day operations of the business, including installation and repair work. His extensive experience and education in the information technology field make him well qualified for this work. However, he claims he is just "the brawn," and Cheryll is "the brains" of the operation.

Harold says he is careful not to let the business control his life and, therefore, tries to work only 40 to 45 hours per week. Overtime being a requirement of her job, Cheryll generally works 45 to 50 hours per week for U.S. West. In addition, she works 10 to 16 hours per week for Alarm Tracks. Although she would like to have more free time to travel and pursue other interests, she recognizes that the investment she makes in the business now will pay off in the future. Harold and Cheryll agree that, like most small businesses, their biggest challenge is marketing. Harold says it's slow work, but they are building a customer base and are starting to get referrals from these satisfied customers. Both Cheryll and Harold encourage others to look into business ownership. They advise prospective business owners to seek assistance from small business development organizations and highly recommend the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME). In addition, they feel that their strong belief in God and their practice of giving back to the community have helped make their business successful.

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Profile

Charlene Mashia

Charlene was born in Cleveland, Ohio, the youngest of four children. She moved with her mother and three siblings to Portland when she was only three years old. Her mother, brothers, and sister still live in the Portland area. Charlene is married and has three children of her own.

A high achiever from a young age, Charlene skipped the 8th grade. She graduated from the University of Portland with a bachelor's degree in accounting and from Portland State University with a master of taxation degree. As a certified public accountant she has held career positions with Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), Nike, and Pacificorp. Still her passion has always been to be an entrepreneur in the entertainment industry.

Charlene took the plunge into business ownership by opening Brown Sugar & Spice Talent Management in February 1999. Brown Sugar & Spice is a professional model and talent agency specializing in talent of ethnic diversity. She currently has a talent pool of about 75 people. Although a very young company, her client list includes such companies as Adidas International, Fred Meyer, Columbia Sportswear, 20th Century Fox, CBS, and the Lifetime Channel. The most high-profile project Charlene is working on is a to-be-released 20th Century Fox movie called Navy Diver. For this movie, Charlene's company supplied 10 persons, including her 11-year-old son Edward, whose character is the son of Carl Brasher, portrayed by Cuba Gooding Jr.

Charlene took a risk by leaving the security and high pay of the corporate world. However, she says the satisfaction she derives from being her own boss and working in the industry she loves is so great, she couldn't imagine working for someone else again. Charlene generally works between 40 and 60 hours per week and is responsible for all aspects of her

Discussion

Labor force issues do not take place in a vacuum. Most individuals make labor force decisions based on a multitude of cultural and social factors. For many, labor force decisions are significantly narrowed by seemingly unrelated factors and events such as the environment in which an individual was reared; by family obligations and responsibilities; due to divorce or the death of a spouse; because of governmental policies. By looking at differences in the social characteristics of Oregon's minorities, one should be able to better understand the issues affecting minority participation in the labor force. For example, a much greater percentage of Black households in Oregon and the U.S. are headed by women (with no husband present) than are Asian or American Indian households. It is near impossible to expect this not to have an effect on the career and income potential of these individuals and families. And, it is equally likely that there will be an effect on the educational achievement and career potential of the children from many of these families.

It must also be recognized that there are differences - at the mean - between Oregonian's racial minorities with respect to the importance of education, career success, and financial reward. For example, those American Indians who choose to stay on or near a reservation are, in a real sense, indicating that their traditional culture and family relationships are more important than "a secure job in the city." For these individuals - and there may be many of them - the challenge is even greater than that of the rest of Oregon's rural population: economic opportunities without the loss or destruction of cultural values, or ties to family and friends. ■

company. She says her biggest challenge is staying focused on the mundane, but essential, parts of business ownership. When not working, Charlene spends most of her time with her family. Her main recreation is squeezing in an occasional movie.

Charlene says that to be successful in business ownership, one must be professional. She believes this is especially important for minority business owners. She feels that her educational background has provided her with an extra level of professional credibility, which is important when dealing with her clients. Earning the client's immediate respect is of paramount importance for the long-term business relationships she is trying to cultivate. In addition, the new entrepreneur must be tenacious and passionate about his or her chosen business. Finally, every new business owner must be willing to seek help and advice on those aspects of business ownership in which they are weak. The one caveat: one must be able to weed through the bad advice for the good.

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